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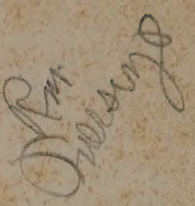

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1927

DESIGN IN THE THEATRE

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
WATERLOW AND SONS LIMITED,
LONDON DUNSTABLE AND WATFORD

DESIGN IN THE THEATRE

Commentary by George Sheringham and James Laver, together with literary contributions by E. Gordon Craig, Charles B. Cochran and Nigel Playfair

1927

EDITED BY GEOFFREY HOLME
NEW YORK : ALBERT & CHARLES BONI INC., 66, FIFTH AVENUE
LONDON: THE STUDIO, LIMITED, 44, LEICESTER SQUARE, W.C.2

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Dorothy Mullock

THE EDITOR DESIRES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE ASSISTANCE RENDERED TO HIM IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS VOLUME BY THE ARTISTS WHO HAVE KINDLY ALLOWED THEIR DESIGNS TO BE REPRODUCED, AND ALSO BY MRS. LOVAT FRASER, MR. BOYD MORRISON AND THE THEATRE ARTS MAGAZINE

BRITISH DESIGNERS IN THE THEATRE, WITH SOME REFERENCE TO AMERICAN DESIGNERS

BY GEORGE SHERINGHAM

WHEN I set about finding the material for this book I was confident that I could make a collection of splendid drawings for the stage by British designers: this confidence was perfectly justified. Reproduced in this book are the drawings I expected to find and did find. And in addition to these I was fortunate enough to receive three valuable contributions to the Commentary of this book from three of the most distinguished men of the English theatre: A message from Mr. Gordon Craig, a letter from Mr. Nigel Playfair and an article from Mr. Charles B. Cochran. And also permission to reproduce Mr. James Pryde's beautiful picture. Mr. Pryde has never been persuaded to work in the theatre, but to his fundamentally original mind can be traced many developments in the drawings of modern stage-designers.

But when I began my task I was confident that I should discover the artists (who did the drawings in this book) busily at work in many different theatres. How pleasant it would have been to write a foreword about the theatrical lion lying down with the designing lamb; about the great advance of design in the theatre, during the last few years; and the keen interest taken by most theatre managers, in the question of well-designed costumes and scenery! Of the steadily increasing number of theatres where they employ an artist to create new scenery and costumes! How pleasant to have written of how the designers are gaining greater and wider experience through the many problems which they are asked to solve, or again, of how the theatre is keeping pace in its decoration with the modern movements in music and painting! . . . But the distressing fact is that I found the designers in their own studios—for when the truth is told: decoration in the English theatre (one might say British theatre) is still, for the greater part, bound in a tradition, not old but bad, dating back to a time when the æsthetic was at its lowest ebb in this country.

One can honestly assert that if it were not for the vision and educated taste of three or four men only, there would be no stage decoration in the professional theatres worth publishing books about; for the main path of traditional scene painting and costume making has been trodden flat—very flat—by many persons all tramping the way that they hope will lead them to commercial safety: that constant hope and ideal of the Englishman!

What has been done to encourage the new spirit of English design in the theatre is almost entirely the work of the *leading* producers of the time: but for Mr. Nigel Playfair's vision and courage Lovat Fraser might never have had his few years of brilliant achievement in the theatre (there was no one with like vision, alas! to coax Beardsley across the footlights). Mr. Granville Barker gave Mr. Norman Wilkinson and Mr. Albert Rutherston a splendid opportunity; while Mr. Paul Shelving has designed over a hundred productions for Sir Barry Jackson (himself a fine designer), and Mr. Ricketts'

setting for Miss Thorndike's " St. Joan " was, within its convention, one of the most beautiful things that has been seen on the London stage. For Mr. Cochran, Mr. William Nicholson designed his delicious " Hogarth Ballet " and Mr. Edmund Dulac drew his " Cyrano " decorations ; and for him too, Miss Doris Zinkeisen and Mr. Oliver Messel have done excellent work.

A long list could be made of plays, light operas, and ballets, designs for which have been created by artists for these three or four producers during the last ten years or so ; and this could be lengthened by naming the productions done for the Irish theatres of Dublin and Belfast by artists such as Mr. William Conor, Miss Norah McGuiness, Mr. Boyd Morrison, Mr. Cecil Salkeld, Mr. Lawrence Bradshaw and one or two others. Mr. Paul Nash, Mr. Duncan Grant, Mr. Randolph Schwabe, Mr. McKnight Kauffer, Mr. Aubrey Hammond, Mr. Tom Heslewood and Mr. Herbert Norris (the latter having done a fine set for " The Lady of Belmont " recently at the new " Arts Theatre ") have all done good work at some of the London theatres ; when on rare occasions it has been decided to employ an artist, for a change ! And this is practically all ; except for the activities of the play-producing societies, a few provincial repertory theatres, and some work for charity matinees and amateur dramatic clubs. Alas !

It was when I found how comparatively little good work in decoration was to be seen in the larger London theatres that I had to hunt about for the artists who are doing designs for the theatre—those, I mean, who regard it as an art and not a business—and made the discovery that all but two or three are " out of work " as far as the theatre is concerned. Yet I believe there are about forty theatres in the London district and many hundreds in the whole country. In how many can be found scenery and costumes of any kind but the ordinary and commercial ? The answer is that we shall find them only in the theatres of the three or four men to whom I have already referred. Occasionally an opera company will do something good, and the play-producing societies, when they have funds, do much to encourage designers—though they cannot pay for their services ; and there is fine work being done in queer little fit-up theatres, in studios, garages, schoolrooms and gardens. But in all my researches in connection with this book I found only one stage-designer permanently attached to a theatre.

It was when I had almost touched bottom in the unearthing of these iniquities that I wrote about them to Mr. Gordon Craig, and though I do not suppose that they were to him the shock that they are to myself it was my tale about the neglected designers that brought me the generous and characteristic response from Genoa ; the letter and article which should make the publication of this book a notable event. I urge all designers, and would-be designers, to read both with close attention ; and I hope that they will not only think about his offer, which is also something of a challenge, but individually and collectively work on the lines he suggests. Mr. Cochran says in his article, " The Play and the Scene " : " the art of the stage designer has tended of late years to become the spoilt child of that family of arts which make up the art of the theatre." Well ! I know that designers are happy, if not spoilt, at the London Pavilion, at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, the Birmingham Repertory Theatre and one or

two others, but I also know of dozens of able stage-designers who have been or would have been spoilt in another sense—the sense of starving to death—if they had relied on the theatre as a means of livelihood. Therefore I think it is true to say that the " spoiling " of the stage-designers is local to a few theatres and personal to a few lucky artists ; and the fact that the subject of stage decoration is much written about and illustrated in recent books and magazines does not mean that the theatre as a whole has begun to take this art seriously.

Mr. Bernard Shaw has said . . . " Art is kept alive, not by the established trade in it, but by the desperate efforts of art-hungry individuals to create and re-create it out of nothing for its own sake."

I think this is and has been true of every art in this country for about a century, except perhaps literature ; especially is it true of the stage-designer's art. Nothing but sheer art-hunger could keep men and women month after month, year after year, drawing costumes and scenery for imaginary theatres ; filling their studios with all manner of projects, plans, cartoons and paintings—creating and re-creating them out of nothing, and for nothing but their own delight in the art for its own sake.

The "Arts Theatre of London " is a fine title indeed ! and at length we have the right to use it. Most great cities of the world have had their arts theatre these many years, but we, always slow-starters and bad-spenders, have only now at last built our own. The name is inspiring, the aim should be high, for the possibilities are immense. The theatre itself is small ; no matter ! Its architecture is distinguished (being the work of Mr. Morley Horder). The art of the theatre in England has always needed a trial ground and, perhaps, a forcing house ; for a work of art should be tried and proved before it is thrust out into a commercial world which, too often, tinkers with ideas without having grasped their import. This theatre, if it is to earn the full right to its high-sounding title, should bring about a new spirit of harmony among all those arts that together make the art of the theatre.

Most theatre managers believe and almost invariably act on the belief that the best man to design a scene or a costume is the craftsman who makes it. There is overwhelming evidence that this belief is wrong. It would be as sane to believe that a builder can design a building as well as an architect, and nobody but the tradesmen who sit on Borough Councils would believe anything so fundamentally silly. Why do we build so many atrociously bad buildings every year all over our unfortunate countryside ?—because penny-wise tradesmen will build without architects. Why do we fill our theatres month after month and year after year with tasteless, joyless and often anachronistic scenery and costumes ? Why ?—because theatre managers so rarely employ designers. Yet the art is being kept alive, it has never been more vigorously alive than now ; I write with some bitterness because I have seen so much effort and *splendid* effort—not wasted, I will not say wasted, because the artist has his personal reward and pleasure in the doing, but lost, lost to the theatre, and lost to the people ; to the audiences, who would love it and would be clamouring for it if they knew just how they are being obstinately and persistently defrauded of an art they pay for but do not receive.

England has now the finest school of theatre designers it has ever had, in

spite of the loss of the most brilliant—Claud Lovat Fraser ; and as I have not the slightest hesitation in stating, they are nearly all out of work, and England is, as usual, cutting a pretty poor figure in this branch of art. It is futile to tell the English people how mentally, morally, and spiritually dangerous it is at all times to neglect design in any of the arts ; because it is physically dangerous to neglect it in things mechanical, they treat their engineers always with respect. Perhaps some theatre managers think of scenery as a branch of mechanics ; now I come to think of it, I am sure they do, and this would account for much that is wrong in their reign of error ; they—like a barber's victim in Charles Keene's drawing, who preferred his head scurfy !—prefer their scenery and costumes to be utterly commonplace ; not content with their debased personal taste they make a noisy parade of their conviction that the unfortunate public likes them that way. This type of theatre manager is a low brow, everyone is agreed about that, including himself ! That is, one may say, a person lavishly endowed with the faculty that we call commonsense : his senses are common and his imagination stunted or absent ; he has not yet awakened to the fact that the public, for about a decade, have been flocking to see well-designed shows, and shows which have fine colour. The immense success of the Russian Ballets (as long as they were Russian, and before they became Parisian), " The Beggar's Opera," " Chauve Souris," " Sumurun," " St. Joan " and other productions should be proof enough that the public taste *is sound* and that *it welcomes good decoration when it can get it.* It was the glowing colour of the Russian Ballets, particularly those designed by Leon Bakst and danced by Nijinsky and also " Sumurun " (designed by Ernst Stern) which first interested the general public in the art of modern stage design as we understand it now ; and to these foreign influences we are indebted for the removal of some of the barriers that until the appearance of these new influences had kept the form of costume and scene in the rut of Victorian naturalism.

It is my conviction that the advent of these ballets awakened a certain interest in the public mind as to the quality and talents of native designers, and thus it was led to realize what had been clear to the thoughtful for years : some of the truths taught by Gordon Craig—" the most famous man of the theatre in Europe," according to Mr. Bernard Shaw, for Gordon Craig is an Englishman of genius, and we should have been the first, not the last, country to recognize the fact. Ever since the public was made conscious that it had been and still is neglecting him, its great mouth has been frothing with excuses : more wordy than convincing, these excuses do nothing to mitigate the neglect of such a prophet ; a neglect that is a smirch on the honour of our national theatre. The question of what should be done for the realization of Gordon Craig's ideals irks the public conscience like a wound that will not heal. If this book does something to keep the wound open and painful, so much the better.

The public—that old English public so useful to writers of forewords !—has, up to the present, only protested in a negative way about badly mounted plays : it grumbles about them if they are too obviously bad but it always has the same behaviour : it goes to a play if it likes it and it stays away if it does not. The dramatic critics, perhaps because their brains and ears

have been developed at the expense of their eyes, prefer good design to bad, but they neglect to say so : they will praise quite generously a finely designed setting while they rarely if ever condemn the vulgar stupid scenery and costumes which debauch the taste of the public in more than two-thirds of our theatres. The atrocities that are perpetuated in musical comedies year after year pass unrebuked. A little wholesome invective from the critics would soon have the effect of making the public articulate, and then the whole standard of decoration in the theatre would of necessity become enormously improved. The critics stamp heavily and collectively on bad taste wherever they find it in the theatre, except when it occurs, as it so constantly does occur, in the decoration. I imagine the function of the dramatic critics is to search for art—in the play, in the actor, in the producer, in all that happens in the working side of the proscenium, and I deduce from their habits that critics are expected (by their editors) to say when they cannot discover any art ; certainly they generally do so in a most amusing and informative way—indeed the dramatic columns are about the best reading one finds in newspapers—but they fail the theatre incomprehensibly in this one respect, they do not condemn bad design. I submit that discordant colour, worn-out old scenic formulæ and all sorts of pictorial anachronisms do not help a play, and more : that they degrade theatrical art as a whole ; also that good taste in mounting a play never detracts from the essential importance of the play, nor the essential work of the actors, and does, or should, materially assist both. The enemy in the field is the manager, not of course the scenic artist : him we may respect, and he and his staff are as necessary to the designer as the orchestra to the conductor, the builders to the architect, the mechanics to the engineer. Anyone who has swung on a giddy little bridge (as I have) before a perfectly vast expanse of blank canvas in a paint room must realize how essential he is and that—except for the designer's essential creative design—the scenic craftsman can do an amazing number of things better than the designer. In rare instances one man is both designer and scenic-craftsman : notable examples are Mr. Victor Hembrow, Mr. Oliver Bernard and M. Marc Henri. But as a rule the unfortunate result of scenic-artists doing their own designing in the theatres—in most of them—anyone can see for himself. The conceiving of costumes and the making of costumes are also two separate arts : the kind of skill required to make a costume is widely separated from the *flair* and scholarship necessary to him who designs a costume. In spite of the fact that in every production of *artistic importance* for many years the scenes and costumes have been designed by the *same* artists, it is the custom in an ordinary theatre to have costumes made by one firm and the scenery by another, without a designer to see that these do not conflict. As it is, they nearly always do conflict—often to an excruciating extent. Perhaps because of this quite avoidable muddling a number of persons are just now clamouring for the suppression, ejection, elimination—or whatever way they like it put—of all painted decoration from our stages ; and the rebuilding of our theatres so that scenery shall no longer be necessary ! However, as painted scenery has been in more or less continuous use since the year 458 B.C. (there seems to be a doubt as to whether it was Æschylus or Sophocles who actually invented the art) it is doubtful and unlikely that a tradition so enduring will be lightly discarded ; and so the

problem for the English designer will not lie in any immediate change in the form of the actual theatre. Problems from this contingency, at least to me, seem remote : English theatres, hundreds of them, are sturdily built and likely to stand up for a very great number of years, and they have all been intended for plays to be acted in painted scenes in such a way that nothing will really work well in them but painted scenery, and as painting, assisted by light, is the most adaptable of media and can suggest any known form and any known colour, is there reason for discontent against the structure of our theatres, that are the fruits—rather crystallized fruits I admit—of centuries of ingenuity and thought ? Others do not see it like this, they yearn after the fourth dimension and state, untruthfully, that our stages cannot suggest adequately even the third. They have a violent urge to impose new and severe limitations (though they call it something else !) on our theatres. Here is an example :—

" The theatre is dead.
We are not working for new decoration.
We are not working for new literature.
We are not working for new lighting systems.
We are not working for new masks.
We are not working for new stages.
We are not working for new costumes.
We are not working for new actors.
We are not working for new theatres.
We are working for the theatre that has survived the theatre.
We are working for the sound body of a new society.
And we have confidence in the strength of newer generations.
They are aware of their problems.
The theatre is dead (again !).
We want to give it a splendid burial."

This was written by Herr Friedrich Kiesler, of Vienna (or was it Leningrad ?), as a Foreword to the catalogue of the International Theatre Exposition, New York, 1926. The reader will notice that Herr Kiesler is not a very constructive fellow ! His genius burns more brightly on the destructive side of theatrical life : in nine terrible lines he destroys the whole fabric of the existing international theatre ; his pen is indeed mightier than a bomb ! But in addition to this Foreword, Herr Kiesler wrote an article in the same catalogue, entitled " Debacle of the Modern Theatre " ; here is some of it :—

" The contemporary theatre calls for the vitality of life itself, a vitality which has the force and tempo of the age. For such energy the proscenium with its angles, its here-and-there, is not enough. Its breadth fills the entire stage ; it demands depth, freedom of movement, space in the truest sense of the word, it cannot get this on the picture stage, where the action and the scenery are designed for a frontal effect." (Now we are coming to the real work !) " The new spirit bursts the stage, resolving it into space to meet the demands of the action. It invents the space stage, which is not merely *a priori* space, but also appears as space."

In the United States they may be able to do these things ! I don't know. But I do know that in England we cannot afford to have our stages burst and resolved into space, and even if we could I feel distinctly doubtful as to whether our playwrights and actors would really wish for infinity as a setting. Optically we are not so richly gifted as the house-fly, which can see in all directions at once : out of the back of its head, and even perhaps through its hat for all I know !

Our stages are designed for " frontal effect " because in the main we live life, see life, theatres and everything else as a " frontal effect ; " indeed rarely do we inquire below the surface ! Unless Herr Kiesler has wings or wheels attached to the stalls in his space-theatre (I make him a present of this idea) so that his audience through moving rapidly round the actors may be deluded into believing that they see the actors back to front and front to back as a single impression—unless Herr Kiesler has this done, I do not see how he will obtain anything really more satisfying than the modern painter, " designing in solids," can achieve in a normal theatre ; given enough chance. It is true that the artist must create both scene and costume, never failing to remind himself constantly that his work will be seen by an audience so arranged that no two members will see it from the same angle of vision, but it is inaccurate, if not actually foolish, to say that the stage picture is *flat*. Let us imagine, as a mental illustration, an audience and a stage with a charming dancer on it, the men in the gallery see the top of her head yet at the same instant the men in the stalls see the sole of her foot (which of course is not flat, but let that pass). The point is that the experience of the audience is not one of flatness. Once more from the same catalogue I am able to quote, this time M. Adolf Loos, of Paris : " Properly understood . . . . the theatre is a school for unborn intellect." M. Loos says himself that it is Herr Kiesler's space stage that he has in mind, only he calls it a " circus," and gives a fairly accurate description of the circus as the theatre of the future. From this we may deduce that our country was innocently in the very van of theatrical progress fifty years ago, for were not the elephants and piebald ponies of the " Lords " Sanger—George and John—even then drawing space-stages from village to village ? As lately as a month ago, when I saw his rather boastful bills stuck on a rock in Shropshire, " Lord " John was still re-erecting his " School for unborn intellect."

Nothing delights me so much in Mr. Craig's message " To the English designers of sceneries and costumes " as this passage : " Never mind about inventing new stages, stick to the old one and learn its shape and uses. It is a good stage and it will do." Only the most unprecedented series of earthquakes could change the form of all the old theatres, so it is satisfactory to have the assurance from the best authority that we do well to stick to the old stage. When rude foreigners call our theatres " Peep holes," " Picture stages," " Peep shows with assembly rooms appended," and our audiences " A parquet of mummies in evening dress," " décolleté jellies " (can this possibly be Herr Kiesler's ungallant allusion to the ladies !), " antiquated youths," is it not time to form ourselves into a " Society for the Prevention of—let us say—Meddling Highbrows."

Mr. Terence Gray, writing on stage lighting, makes the assertion that " Of all the factors that have emerged in the exploration of the artistic possibilities

of play-production, the most potent, the most vital, is that of light. It has been maintained that a play could be performed adequately with the aid of light only, but at least it can certainly be said that not less than one-third of the power and expression which can be got out of a play can be obtained only by an inspired use of this medium."

Of course light is a potent and vital factor in the theatre and, if we value colour, the problem is simply this : can projected coloured-light produce a colour effect in any way comparable in variety, richness and subtlety to a colour effect obtained by normal light reflected in a normal way to the eye by self-coloured objects ? The answer to the problem is simple too : No, it cannot, because the *form* of coloured light cannot at our present state of knowledge be controlled ; but only its quantity and direction. Supposing a theatre to be equipped with a number of lighting units each capable of projecting a beam of coloured light, supposing too that each coloured light be a beautiful and even subtle colour (though this it rarely is in practice), what then ? Can the form of this light be controlled ? Will not the colours smudge and overlap, and the beams light anything and everything that lies in their path ? The colour will splash over, without register or reason, the face of the leading lady, a portion of background, a bit of the stage . . . anything—indiscriminately. If the whole stage is illuminated with a single colour, however beautiful, what do we achieve ? A monochrome, which, unless it is quickly replaced by another colour, becomes as tiresome as those pieces of dyed film—dyed blue or orange—which mar otherwise good photographs on the Kinematograph screens. What form of projected light could have obtained the splendid glowing harmony of Mr. Charles Rickett's painted curtains in the Earl of Warwick's tent.[1]

Painting, dyeing materials, fabrics, faces, properties or what not is the only method that we know at present of obtaining a *controlled* colour scheme of any complexity and subtlety.

Lighting is not yet an art, it is a science, and its only function in the theatre as yet is to make the movement, form and colour—created by actor, producer and designer—visible.

Some five or six years ago Major Adrian Klein invented a projecting lantern which was capable of throwing all the colours of the visible spectrum on the stage. I have already written at some length about this.[2] Unfortunately the theatre which acquired this really wonderful instrument has, as far as I am aware, never made use of it. Major Klein achieved a control of coloured light that was far in advance of anything that had been done before. He is still working out his problems of light and colour, and as he is not only a scientist but a painter and musician, his recent book, " Colour Music," has a bearing on stage problems.

The Greeks went to their theatres at dawn and we go to our theatres at dusk but perhaps one of the fundamental reasons why we go so gladly to the theatre when, by all natural laws we should be going to our beds, is, that by doing so we gain an extension of life ; for when the sun and daylight have gone then all colour is gone too. The brightest moon can show us no colour. It is the coldness of the films that is the opportunity of

[1] " St. Joan," by G. B. Shaw, at the Regent Theatre.
[2] *English Review*, February, 1923.

the theatre, and probably largely the cause of the growing emotional reaction to colour that is now rampant in all classes of the community. In Belgravia we may find satisfaction in the subtle colour suggestions of Persian Miniatures or faded prints ; in Hoxton we may find it in the stupid vulgarities of brewer's posters, though I cling to the hope that these are only the brewer's expression of his personal beastliness, and that we, in Hoxton, prefer the fierce colours of orange barrows lit by naphtha flares. Anyway, the world in general loves colour, especially at night, and no device of man has produced colour with more fascination than when it is harnessed to the wit, the dancing and the drama of the theatre.

No attempt has been made in this book to give a general survey of the vigorous school of theatre designers now working in the American theatre. Some reproductions of the work of American artists who have won international fame for their distinguished scenic designs, have been included and are among the most interesting illustrations. It is hoped on another occasion to deal more justly with a subject that grows yearly in extent and interest.
Mr. Robert Edmond Jones, whose beautiful setting for " Hamlet " was seen in London recently, has many enthusiastic admirers of his work in this country. He has that rarely found gift : a sense of dramatic fitness. When studying a number of his designs I feel that his inspiration—and no less a word will do—is derived directly, in the most real sense, through the plays he decorates, and not through any other source. He must be ranked as one of the most interesting figures in American art, a designer of whom Europe may well be jealous. And one who seems unhampered by the problem that arises from profound dissatisfaction with the theatre as we know and have known it. He, Mr. Wenger and Mr. Urban, are all men who achieve fine things in the theatre as it still is.
Mr. Norman-Bel Geddes is an artist of a different order : his designs for " The Divine Comedy " reveal a mind I doubt can continue to work contentedly in the world of the theatre as it at present exists everywhere in America and Europe : a world of more or less rigid convention and ancient tradition. In the words of Professor Reinhardt : " Geddes is a native of this world. He knows that three things are necessary to the living theatre : actors, collaborators, onlookers. With voluntary humility he bows before this trinity. Without losing himself he has the most perfect understanding, the most ardent devotion, the most sensitive adaptability to the work of others. He transforms and reveals himself simultaneously. He loves his neighbour in art as himself.
Blessed by the sun and rain he will mature as the strongest man in the theatre of this time."

And now I gladly abandon my pen to conclude here with the three deft, weighty and valuable contributions :—The message " To the English Designers of Sceneries and Costumes," from Mr. Gordon Craig ; the letter to myself from Mr. Nigel Playfair; and " The Play and The Scene," by Mr. Charles B. Cochran.

TO THE ENGLISH DESIGNERS OF SCENERIES AND COSTUMES

BY E. GORDON CRAIG

Touching this matter of *Design in the Theatre*. As design is part and parcel of the whole affair, part of the Play, the Drama, it stands to reason that the very best person to make the Designs is the man who makes the Play, if he can.

Shakespeare we are told drew his designs in words, without thought of the kind of spectators who would be coming into power in 1900, spectators who want spectacle and who, according to some people, boss and spoil all things ; he wrote in words which were and are " above their heads " and so it follows as the day the night the Public fails to have a use for Shakespeare.

If he came in person to the world again, this Public—about 200,000 persons —would meet him at the station, mob him, and attempt to break off a bit of his genius as a souvenir.

How long will London tolerate this Public and its Opinion—that is what the other Publics are asking.

Shakespeare being a high-brow, an out-and-out high-brow, painted his sceneries in words and with words. The good man wanted to do it all,* to write the play, paint the scene, act the parts, and produce it, light it, and be his own audience. This he succeeded in doing, and must have enjoyed himself immensely. If you read a play of his, you see him at work doing everything.

So that, after all, the high-browed gentlemen who tell you (I am addressing the designers) that you need not trouble to paint and build up any actual castle for " Macbeth " or any heath for " King Lear " are quite correct.

The others, the low-browed theatrical blokes (I use the word bloke advisedly), who tell you, you are jolly well not going to mess up their very clean stage with your pots of paints, and put their nerves on edge with your fanciful notions, are also quite right, as you have possibly noticed, for I ask you when were you *last* employed to paint scenes and design notions in a Theatre ? You can hardly remember it was so long ago.

You must have observed that the high-brows and the low-brows are all united against you, and do not intend to allow you to get a footing on our English Stage. And our English Stage is what matters to us Englishmen.

It is of far less importance to us in England what they are doing in America, Germany, Russia, France, Holland, Italy and Spain, but for all that in passing I may be allowed to linger for a moment to tell you, that, in almost every other land except our own, the designer is held to be part and parcel

* Artists, clever and stupid alike, have often wanted to do this. Bernini the architect seems to have gone further than anyone else, for he wrote the play, built the theatre, painted the scenes, composed the music, invented the machines and cut the statues, and so ran the risk of displeasing many.

of the theatre and his designs and notions greatly respected and he himself given a hearty welcome by the managers and stage directors.†

I was not, nor am I to-day, entirely in favour of the stage becoming the playground of every designer or painter. I belong to a theatrical family, if you will remember it ; so I am prejudiced (I hope that doesn't mean *narrow* to you) in favour of my own workshop remaining the sole property of those who give their lives to the stage, and I always shall be prejudiced that way. But many of the men of your calling, have been generous to me, oddly enough sometimes more generous than those of the theatre, and so I have for some years been thinking of a way in which I might do something in return for you. And I have found something rather good for you.

It will give your talents full scope, you will be masters of your platform or stage or whatever you like to call it. You will enrage the more pompous of the Dramatic Critics for quite a few years, but you will fill your playhouse, and you will at last be able to pay your bills. You will do without playwrights and actors, those two who have so long said and shown that they could do without you.

But it will mean hard work, and it will mean sticking to it until you succeed, and it will mean giving up everything else to do it.

Now the question I want answered is are you ready to do that ? I ask this publicly, because I have no doubts in my own head as to your immense abilities, but perhaps I rather doubt your capacity for sticking to a thing and making it succeed in spite of private and public criticisms. You have to prove me wrong here.

What you ought to do to begin with, is to get together and form yourselves into a properly organized body, independent of all impresarios or business men and naturally there should be no theatre people in it. (They don't want you, good, then you don't want them, all's well : no bad feeling : simply go your own way. Perhaps later on they *may* want you, and you may want them ; if so that would be one very good result of this new move of yours.)

As you are forming yourselves into a group I suggest you get a book of the rules of the Fascist Party, and without slavishly copying them in all their ways, copy them in their rules which seem to you practical to your idea and helpful to yourselves, especially those dealing in discipline.

Before the Fascisti took Rome, they gave some considerable time to putting themselves in order ; now to do that you want to know what it is you are going to do after you are in order, and (if you care about it) I will tell you the day I see you organized . . . and if you will take the trouble to enquire into the ideas I have given to the theatres of other lands you will find that I have not deceived them, my ideas have positively appeared in due time, have been tried, and have proved valuable.

But this time I'm not going to publish my idea broadcast. I have it and intend to hold it for you, the British Designers who can't get a footing in

† This summer London has been flooded with propaganda from the city of Munich, telling of its Festivals in its " Bavarian State Theatres " from July 26 to August. These have been advertised by a leaflet which you have seen in every copy of the " Studio " and elsewhere. In every leaflet, was the name of each piece, author, stage director, *and stage Designer*. The names of the stage designers are Adolf Leunebach, Leo Pasetti, Emil Prectorius, Josef Hillerbrand, Julius Diez and Friedrich Heubuer.

the British Theatre, and I don't intend to pass it along free to Germans, Americans, or Russians, who would bring it out in advance of you for a certainty. So you must hurry up.

It's an idea which will not empty the other theatres, but will assuredly fill yours when you have it, and that will only be when you have organized yourselves into a practical hard-headed group of workers ready to carry out something difficult but made particularly for you and for no one else.

The first thing you will have to do is to learn the construction of the modern stage. At present you seem to be rather ignorant of this. Never mind about inventing new stages, stick to the old one and learn its shape and its uses. It's a good stage and it will do. Avoid all innovating as you study ; put a curb on your imaginations or fancies and settle down, one and all, to master the comparative sizes, shapes, proportions, fittings and what are called practical possibilities of the modern stage ; its floor, its under stages, flies, upperfloors, and side galleries, scene docks, and every part and corner of all the stages you can possibly come to know about. After this turn to the fittings, electrical and hydraulic hand worked and every other kind of machine elaborate or simple which is in use in the modern theatre and by which the scenes are manipulated. Then occupy yourselves entirely with the lighting plant and all its machines, beginning with a single electric lamp and working up until you have mastered the switchboard. Then learn the technique of costume ; how to design costumes you may already know ; learn how to cut them, to make them, to wear them. Learn the whole thing, the whole technical theatre.

All this is where the need for organization comes in.

If you are a body of 20, or 80, separate yourselves into three groups, one scenic, one lighting, one costume. And each group choose a leader and follow him. He will be learning with you as he teaches you, but choose the man who you think the most practical man of your especial group to push you all along quickly but without over haste and bring you all to the conclusion of your studies. And they are to be practical studies and not mere book work.

The scenic group will have to build a small model stage ; one of your studios will have to hold it, it will probably fill a good half of the room. As your studies will be made with this model stage, you can test on it all that your leader speaks to you about and as he is speaking.

The smallest thing in your stage is probably a brace ; * the largest is a revolving stage.

Both of these can be made and tested, and you need not suppose you have to make all of them full size. As with these two parts of the whole machine, so with the other parts. There are some hundreds.

Take them one by one, make them when you can (*one* brace is enough, you don't want to make 50, so is one roller for one roll curtain, and so on).

" What for ? " you are possibly already asking, and it answers itself. " So as to know the place you are to work in " : for how do you suppose you'll ever get a footing on any stage let alone on mine, if you are unfamiliar with the place you are to work in and ignorant of its limitations and possibilities. The knowledge you have of a modern stage is, I expect, rather superficial ;

* A thing to prop up a small piece of scenery.

and the value of every new design you make only increases as you come to know the stages better and better. So that if you suppose you can dispense with this knowledge you start handicapped. Rid yourself of that useless idea and you'll find the work much easier and those you come in time to work with more agreeable.
And when you are ready I'll give you the idea.

LETTER FROM NIGEL PLAYFAIR

Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

DEAR SHERINGHAM,

I am very glad to hear that you are writing about the Art of Design in the English Theatre, for no one has greater qualifications both in taste and experience than yourself. I am glad to feel that in undertaking this work you will use the word " Design " and not " Decor," a nasty foreign word which suggests that the Art, as practised by yourself and Wilkinson and Ricketts, is controlled and inspired by Continental influence.

As you know very well, it is nothing of the kind—it owes very little to that influence. On the contrary, surprised as English people may be to learn it, and indifferent as I fear most of them may be, the whole of the modern movement in design in the modern theatre is due in the first place to English activity.

It is only our notorious lack of organization—a vice which unfortunately is too often boasted of as if it were a merit—that has retarded its development and has allowed our rivals to outstrip us everywhere in quantity if not in quality.

It is an art—if only our Managers would be persuaded to realize it—in which English Artists are and have been for a long time supreme.

It is an art which is of the utmost importance to the well-being of our theatre —since—for most of us at any rate—the opportunity of deceiving the public with empty ornament is at an end. That is at any rate one advantage which tempers the many disasters which our empty granaries provide for us !

It is such a book as yours which will in time lead the law-givers of the Drama to demand more and more the presence of the Artist in the theatre and at last bring recognition and esteem to those who have gone finely about their tasks in the face of discouragement and neglect.

Good luck to you—

Yours sincerely,

NIGEL PLAYFAIR.

THE PLAY AND THE SCENE

BY CHARLES B. COCHRAN

The art of the stage designer has tended of late years to become the spoilt child of that family of arts which make up the art of the theatre. Far more attention has been lavished both by the experts and the laity upon the decorative aspects of theatre-craft than upon any other of the contributory arts and crafts of the stage. We must not be deceived by this, however, into giving to the scene the prime place of importance in the theatre, for, important as scene is, it must be remembered that the primary arts of the theatre are those of player and playwright. I stress this point at the outset because, keen as I am on seeing the finest pictorial and decorative talents of our time being made contributory, if not tributary, to the contemporary stage, and much as I have worked personally to bring about this consummation, I feel very definitely that the art of the decorator must always be ancillary to the intention of the author—or in the case of opera, the composer —and must extend, and never threaten to submerge, the talent and personality of the individual actor.

I urge this by way of warning because of the recent notable insistence in exhibitions of theatrical art, in the better-class journals which devote considerable space to the theatre, and in other quarters, on the importance of setting and costume and of the visual side of *mise-en-scène*, and the relative neglect of those other factors which not only provide a considerable portion of the illusion of the stage but which also need to be taken into account by every theatrical designer. For it must be remembered that whereas a great picture or a great piece of sculpture must essentially be conceived in terms of, perhaps momentary, *rest*, every good stage design must be conceived in terms of the essential dramatic *movement*. The one, in a word, is static, the other dynamic. So that if our stage artist provides a scene which is fundamentally a single stated entity, he endangers the whole dramatic concept which it should be his function to assist in making plain to the beholder.

Enormous strides have been made, particularly during the present century, in the sphere of theatrical decoration. With the supersession of the conventionalized stage (used in various forms in the classical theatre of antiquity and in our own Elizabethan and Restoration theatres), it may be said that the theatrical decorator first makes his bow to the public, taking the place formerly held by the architect. The difficulty of achieving naturalism on the stages of former generations with their simple equipment of wings and backcloths and with their primitive lighting apparatus, added to the fact that stage managers of those earlier days had little pictorial imagination or training, doubtless led to the development of the highly ornate and crudely colourful settings which were still familiar accompaniments of the melodramas and musical shows of my own youth.

The reform towards naturalism which is generally associated with the name of Tom Robertson inevitably paved the way for reforms in scene and the presentation of more true-seeming settings for the newly-born naturalistic play and naturalistic acting. Meanwhile spectacular decoration was evolving

by way of the old-time pantomime transformation and the elaborate scenic effects of, for instance, Drury Lane melodramas, towards that visual enchantment which was to find its highest achievement in the works of such masters as Leon Bakst, Derain, Picasso, which have been familiarized to the British public by way of the Russian Ballet, by the presentation of " Sumurun," and which I have sought to perpetuate in various spectacular revues, in Dulac's settings for " Cyrano de Bergerac," and in other of my more picturesque productions.

Bald realism soon found its Waterloo in the decorative, just as it did in the literary fields of drama. The stage must always be the house of make-believe—if it would make us believe in the immensities. Just as the dramatist selects the most vital moments of the career of his protagonists, and just as the actor heightens or broadens his effects to produce the illusion of true-seeming, so the theatrical decorator who would convince us of the actuality of the simplest cottage interior or the barest landscape must heighten and strengthen the suggestions of nature rather than merely portray Nature's actualities.

In this department of what one may describe as the neo-realism of dramatic decoration the laurels must certainly go, so far as creative innovation is concerned, to the Russian and American schools. Robert Edmond Jones' scenes for " Anna Christie," which I presented at the Strand some years back, represent to my mind the high-water mark in this genre so far as the London stage is concerned.

While musical comedy, revue, ballet, and spectacular drama give opportunities for the lavishly-picturesque, just as domestic comedy and naturalistic drama provide a vehicle for neo-realistic settings, Shakespearean and classic drama generally—and in this context I would not exclude a number of modern plays—lend themselves to more abstract scenic treatment. The greatest advances in this direction have been made possible largely owing to the magnificent pioneer work of Gordon Craig, whose remarkable and entirely original conceptions have served more than those of any other designer to widen the boundaries of the theatre of imagination. I am proud to recognise that a man of our own race should have had this world-wide influence on the theatre of our time, and that his theory and practice should have influenced so profoundly the whole province of theatrical presentation throughout the whole world. This vast influence of Gordon Craig's upon his contemporaries, and his own unique achievements, are evidence for my own contention that the designer who is also a practical man of the theatre is destined to produce the most significant and beneficial results. The art of the theatre must always be a synthesis of all those arts which go to its constitution. It is not merely acting, or play-making, or draughtsmanship and colour, or lighting, or production. It is all these combined with music, choreography, and what-not, to produce showman-like illusion. And the decorator who would most completely express himself in terms of theatre must subject himself to the requirements and realize the contingent arts and techniques which contribute to complete theatrical illusion.

CONTINENTAL DESIGNERS IN THE THEATRE

BY JAMES LAVER

IT was sometime in the middle of the seventeenth century that the conscious intelligence first got out of hand, and inaugurated that tyranny of pure rationalism which is only now beginning to break down. The life of man ceased to be a whole; to see life steadily was to see it in fragments, and each human activity became specialised, and ultimately sterilised; carried to its separate logical conclusion, and finally demonstrated to be pointless. From this disaster of the human spirit, the drama was one of the chief sufferers. What had been born once in the festival of Dionysos, and re-born in the first Mass; what had been the common enthusiasm of a people, and the epitome of an epoch, became a department of literature. The drama was no longer one and indivisible; it was words—and the rest; and the words had almost crowded everything else out of existence.

Shakespeare had supplied his stage's lack of illusion by lyrical description. "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon that bank," makes the services of the lime-light man superfluous; but in such a writer as Racine the words have absorbed the gestures too, so that almost nothing is gained by *seeing* Racine on the stage, although it may still be worth while to hear him spoken. Shakespeare's scenes may have been but labels—"Olivia's Orchard," "Sea-coast of Bohemia," and the rest—but they relied firmly on the imagination of the audience. Racine's *lieu commun* endowed his characters with an almost mathematical isolation. The result was exquisitely subtle, but had little to do with the drama, and still less with scene-painting.

But the branches which literature had lopped from the dramatic stem, had found new roots, and begun to blossom by themselves. The Court ballet transformed itself into opera, and began to employ all the devices of music, dance and spectacle, of which tragedy had divested itself almost completely. It is opera that is the mother of scene-painting, and the latter bears marks of its origin up to the very commencement of the modern re-action. The perspective back-cloth itself was devised for some princely patron, someone who sat always in what was later the middle of the stalls. It could never have been very satisfactory seen from the gallery; perhaps from only one seat in the house was it ever wholly convincing. The misfortune was that drama, when it felt the need of painted scenery, took over *en bloc* all the conventional absurdities of the operatic stage, retreated (not all at once, it

§ As footnotes are precluded by the scope of this rapid survey, it has been thought simpler merely to include a list of books consulted—and to which every acknowledgment is hereby made—in the bibliography of selected works. It is impossible in the space at disposal to do more than indicate the general tendencies of scenic design on the Continent. Any full account of the theatrical history of the last twenty years would be incomplete without some mention of the work of a score of directors and scenic artists here excluded: Pitoëff and Gaston Baty, Picabia and Jean-Victor Hugo in France, Cesar Klein, Sievert, Poelzig, Strohbach and a host of others in Germany, Grünewald in Sweden, Prampolini, Cosomati and Bragaglia in Italy, Drabik in Poland, Cingria and Vincent Vincent in Switzerland, and Zagorodnjnk in Yugo-Slavia. For the account of Martini's "Tetiteatro," or "Theatre of Thetis," I am indebted to an article by the Polish critic Alexander Koltovski, translated by H. C. Stevens.

is true) behind the proscenium arch, and forgot that it had ever moved in rhythm round the orchestra of a Greek theatre, or declaimed the language of Shakespeare from a bare platform in the yard of an inn.

Even costume clung to operatic (that is Court) convention, and tragic heroes played out their destiny in something resembling a jewelled ballet shirt. In the eighteenth century, to strive for realism was perhaps the only possible way of reforming the stage ; and innovators like Kemble and Talma deserve all credit for their share in a very necessary process. Later, even the minutely historical accuracy of the younger Kean had its experimental value, although the whole cargo of archaeology had to be flung overboard before the drama could find itself again. Realism was a necessary phase from which much was learned of value to the theatre ; and there seems little doubt that certain realistic plays can only be played realistically. But the latter half of the nineteenth century, having started on the track of realism, seemed not to know that any other kind of play existed. And Ibsen, daring symbolist, and poet misunderstood, seemed the most realistic playwright of all.

It was in 1887 that Antoine founded the Théâtre-Libre, in order, as he and his supporters firmly believed, to apply the principles of stage naturalism in all their completeness. Instead, he did something quite different, and made a discovery of the first importance for the future of the theatre—that scenery can be made to re-inforce the mood of the play, that stage properties can themselves *act*, and that the art of the human actor is not all speech and gesture, but leaves room for silence and immobility. Antoine himself seems hardly to have realised the force of some of his *mises-en-scène*—indeed his passion for real meat, real fountains, and the rest, seems in direct contradiction to his true accomplishment. Unfortunately, also, his répertoire was singularly limited, full of thesis plays of the Brieux and de Curel type, which hardly lent themselves to novelty of staging.

The reaction came from the group of young writers and artists known as the *Symbolistes*, who, led by Paul Fort, attacked the Théâtre-Libre for its search of the exact, and for giving no help to writers of fantasy and imagination. Fort founded the Théâtre Mixte, which, after two performances, became the Théâtre d'Art, and he enunciated in his manifestoes many of the principles which have since become the commonplaces of the modernist school. Scenery was to be evocative rather than descriptive ; in fact (as M. Moussinac justly claims, in his book on theatrical decoration) all the principles which the Russians have since worked out, and which the Germans have applied, sometimes crudely, but with power and knowledge, had already been advocated by Fort and his friends ; simplification of decoration, the choice, for each scene, of the plastic elements necessary to create its appropriate atmosphere ; stylisation, complete harmony between scenery and costumes, and the abandonment of the perspective back cloth. Among the painters who joined in the battle against naturalism, and painted decorations for the Théâtre d'Art were Vuillard, Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Odilon Redon and K. X. Roussel.

In 1892 the Théâtre d'Art became the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, Lugné-Poé collaborating with Camille Mauclair and Edouard Vuillard to present *Pelleas et Melisande* at the Bouffes-Parisiens. Stanislavsky was present at this performance, and afterwards admitted how much he owed to the decoration

by Vogler, and to all the experimental work which was being carried out in Paris towards the end of the last century.

Stanislavsky himself, shortly afterwards, returned to Russia, and in 1897 had that famous all-night conversation with Nemirovich-Danchenko which resulted in the formation of the Art Theatre of Moscow. Their object was the reform of the Russian stage, but they began at first by proclaiming the gospel of naturalism according to Antoine, and in striving to emulate the realistic effects of the Meiningers, the celebrated German company under Cronegk, which had visited Moscow only a few years before. In fact, naturalism was pushed to an extreme, an attempt being made to reproduce actual conditions of life, with all its accumulated detail, and in particular its merging of the principal characters of a drama in the mass of the participants. It was the opposite of the " star " system which was aimed at, and much more trouble was taken with the rehearsing of crowds than had ever happened before in any theatre. The " super " ceased to exist, and ensemble acting was raised to a level which has perhaps never been reached by any other company of actors.

But the very perfection of their technique caused the members of the Theatre to evolve a kind of symbolic rhythm which was very far from being the mere surface realism they had striven for at first. Stanislavsky, too, passed from Brieux to Maeterlinck, and from Gorky to Tchehov, and with Tchehov realism is itself symbolic. In such a play as " The Sea-Gull " the methods of the Art Theatre flowered, and were justified ; and it is difficult to see by what other method Tchehov's plays could be made even intelligible. The reactions which Stanislavsky's system provoked will be returned to later ; but first something must be said of that development or offshoot of the Russian theatre which is most familiar of all to the European public—the Russian Ballet.

The symbolic use of colour and line which Stanislavsky had seen practised in Paris, the nature of his répertoire made it difficult for him to imitate and develop in Moscow. Maeterlinck's " Blue Bird " was an exception, and served perhaps as a point of departure for other workers in the same field. The Russian Ballet undoubtedly owed something to the experiments of its forerunners, but its astonishing success was due principally to the genius of one man, Serge Diaghilev. The unfortunate Wronbel had inspired a group of young Petrograd painters to attempt the complete transformation of the whole art of scenic design. Diaghilev, with his gift for organisation, collected them under the banner of his review, *Mir Iskousstva*, or *The World of Art*. The members of this group, of which the most famous were Bakst and Benois, practised a kind of mannered archaism, which, whatever its demerits as an art formula, lent itself very appropriately to the decoration of ballet.

In opposition to these Petrograd painters there was also a Moscow group, more in touch with such Parisian movements as Cubism ; and these artists too were enlisted in Diaghilev's service. The most famous names were Larionov, Gontcharova and Barthe, and it is in succession to their work that it seemed natural and logical to Diaghilev to call in the services of French painters like Picasso and Derain.

Both the Petrograd and the Moscow artists were essentially scene-painters.

To them stage decoration meant a painted cloth, and costumes to match ; and although their triumphs were many, they do not belong to the main trend of the art of the theatre, as it has become apparent during the last few years. Bakst was the gorgeous sunset of scene-painting. In his day he was hailed as an innovator ; but he was not the beginning of anything. He was the end of a three-hundred years' process, the culmination of the theatre of the Bibienas, of de Loutherbourg, and Clarkson Stanfield. The Bakst tradition was most suitable for ballet, in particular for oriental or voluptuous ballet ; there was difficulty in applying it to more solemn themes, or to the form of legitimate drama. Even in the Diaghilev ballet itself, it has been superseded by the modified " Constructivism " of such a *décor* as that of " The Cat " in the 1927 season in London. Bakst's real influence was in the minor decorative arts ; and the colour of curtains and cushions, and the covers of chairs, are still bright with the yellows and vermilions which he splashed about the Sultan's harem in " Scheherazade."

" The Cat " dispelled the doubt which had been forming in some minds, that Diaghilev, in spite of his flair, was at last beginning to fall behind the times. It showed that he had other ideas of revivifying the ballet, besides the calling-in of an eminent easel-painter to design a back-cloth. But from participating in the forward movement towards a new theatre, the ballet is, almost by its very nature, excluded. It is too firmly in the operatic tradition, too obviously the child of the Court. In itself it can be enchanting, but it cannot lead us back to the theatre as a unity, for it is itself a fragment of a fragment.

To rediscover the central impulse in the modern movement it is necessary to go back to Appia. It was in 1899 that Adolphe Appia published his monumental work on the reform of staging, *Die Musik und die Inscenierung*. Some years before he had issued a smaller work, dealing with Wagner's operas, and it was the unsatisfactoriness of the scenery at Bayreuth which originally induced him to take up the subject.

Appia began, very properly, with the actor, and insisted that scenic illusion consisted of his living presence on the boards of the theatre. When it was desired to represent a forest, as in the second act of *Siegfried*, it was not necessary to give the spectator the illusion of a forest, but of a man in the atmosphere of a forest. The spectator should be encouraged to concentrate his attention upon the actors, and not wilfully distracted by over-elaborate branches and over-ingenious leaves, attached to strips of netting hung from the flies. The scene-painter can do much with a skilful back cloth, he can do something with cut-out wings, he can do nothing with the ground on which the actors move. With painted scenery there must always be a contrast between the plasticity of the actor and the flatness of his surroundings. If perspective is attempted, the incongruity becomes plainer still, especially if the stage is seen from the side or from the gallery, and the only way to restore a partial harmony is to make the actor look as flat as possible by flooding the stage with light, and completely destroying all natural shadows.

Appia, therefore, laid down that the two essentials of good *décor* were, first, lighting which would emphasise, instead of destroying, the three dimensions of the human form, and secondly, a plastic scene which would give the actor's attitudes and movements all their value. It was to lighting that Appia

chiefly looked to transform the conventional *mise-en-scène*, and it is by his feeling of the importance of the " sculptural " stage that he has most strongly influenced his disciples and followers. He enforced his arguments by applying them to the problem of Wagnerian *décor*, and showed that there was some hope of realising the unity of spectacle, of which Wagner himself had only dreamed.

What made Appia's ideas practicable was the invention of electric lighting ; although it was the introduction of gas which first made it possible to use light not only for illumination but for effect. Oil footlights could not be controlled, their intensity could not be varied at will during a performance ; and in Garrick's time, at least, there was the constant nuisance of snuffing. The problem was enormously simplified by being able to substitute a wire for a tube, but the almost infinite possibilities of electricity were not at first realised. One of the main tasks which occupied the early workers in this field was the problem of finding some convincing substitute for real daylight. Certainly footlights and borders could not give it. The illumination derived from them was patchy ; and the combination of light from above with light from below deprived the stage picture of all reasonable shadows. Worse still, it minimised the play of the actor's features ; in indoor scenes it over-emphasised the walls, and over-illuminated the ceiling.

It was to remedy some of these defects that the Fortuny system was worked out in Germany at the beginning of the century. The essence of his system was the reflection of light from bands of coloured silk, and its diffusion thence on to the sky-dome or cyclorama which occupied the back of the stage. The result was more like daylight than anything that had been accomplished before, but the original Fortuny system, on account of its waste of current and of the rapid deterioration of the bands of silk, has been generally abandoned or modified.

The sky-dome, however, has remained, and is one of the most potent devices for attaining complete scenic illusion. Fortuny proposed a dome of silk which shut up, and could be transported from one place to another. Its fragility and its tendency to crease have led to its being replaced in Germany and America by the sky-dome of plaster, which, no longer semi-circular (for that blocks the side entrances to the stage) takes the form of a flattened shell, bending inwards sharply at the top and at the sides. Whitewashed plaster makes an admirable surface for light to play upon, and the effect seen from the front of the stage is of infinite distance, open sky. By means of the dome also, the necessity for " flies "—strips of canvas painted blue to represent the sky, and hide the stage machinery—is entirely done away with. Even those producers who do not aim at scenic illusion are wise to keep the sky-dome within the range of their possible effects. The more realistic possibilities have been worked out in the Swedish *Ars* system which permits of photographs of real clouds being projected upon the artificial sky and made to move across it. But this is hardly more than a toy interesting to see once, but of little use to the play, or the actor.

Simultaneously with improvements in lighting, have come other mechanical contrivances, designed to simplify the task of the producer and to enable him to attain a nearer illusion of reality. The attempt to play Shakespeare in terms of nineteenth century realism involved a terrible strain on the scene-shifters.

They had to be forever taking away " Portia's House," and putting back " Venice, a Street " ; and with the best will in the world the intervals between each scene became longer and longer ; and Shakespeare's text had to be drastically cut in order to be able to get through it in a single evening. Also, the continuity of the play was broken up, and the swift Elizabethan eloquence failed to leap the gap from scene to scene, and so whip the play to a climax. How were old plays to be allowed to retain their *verve* and impetuosity, and at the same time receive all the benefits of modern staging ? The answer, for a time at least, seemed to be the revolving stage, invented by Lautenschläger at Munich, and installed in the Residenz Theater in 1896, in order to facilitate the production of Mozart's operas. The invention enabled all the scenes necessary to be built up solidly before the performance began, and by revolving the stage, to bring each in turn into view. Five or six settings can be contrived in this way ; if more are needed, they can be built up during the play itself, the audience meanwhile being occupied with the side of the circle turned towards the proscenium opening. The device enables Shakespeare to be played realistically, and without cuts. The scenery itself can be of the most solid kind ; although of course considerable ingenuity is needed to fit the various scenes into segments of the circle. In practice the difficulties are so great that in some theatres where the revolving stage has been installed, producers make no use of it at all, but treat it as part of the ordinary stage floor.

Many alternatives to the revolving stage have been proposed, and installed in theatres in Germany and America—swinging stages, sliding stages, stages that sink into a cellar to be set, while the alternative scene descends from under the roof, and fits itself into the proscenium arch. All these mechanical devices, however, tend to stifle the imagination of the scenic artist, and, except for the revolving stage, they make no difference to his problem, except that they allow him two elaborate scenes in quick succession where before he would have been compelled to simplify.

But to be compelled to simplify is almost a condition of great art ; to make an artist aware of the limitations of his medium is to give him not chains, but wings. The very knots in the wood inspire the carver, and the fresco painters of the quattrocento painted with such confidence and breadth of handling, partly at least, because the plaster dried so quickly. So there was a whole school of men interested in the theatre who would not have anything to do with all the mechanical contrivances for creating illusion. They no longer wished to see Shakespeare performed as the younger Kean would have done it, only more expeditiously ; they strove to reach back to the methods of the Elizabethans, and to make the plays as frankly theatrical as they had been at the first Globe.

This revolt against the picture-stage, against the attempt to give an illusion of life, was part of a larger movement which transformed all the arts during the first decade of the twentieth century. Impressionism in painting, and naturalism in the theatre both claimed to be the abdication of the artist, the world seen through the eye of a camera. Both had their triumphs, but both, at the turn of the century, were seen to be *culs-de-sac*. The old problem of art presented itself once more : if the whole object of the arts is to imitate nature, then its efforts not only cannot succeed, but would be pointless if

they could. Of course, neither the Impressionists nor the Naturalists, neither Monet nor Zola ever did succeed in eliminating the artist. The very slice of life which Zola presented was itself a comment, was itself an attempt to expand his own philosophy : and it is an obvious paradox that most of the realists were propagandists.

On the political side, the reaction corresponded with the decay of *laissez faire*, with the failure of the belief in automatic and mechanical progress, with the realisation that civilisation is, after all, very fragile, and that nothing durable was ever built by accident. The need for Design was felt in every department of life ; and the need, too, to release the theatre from too slavish a representation of actuality, and to set it free to soar a little, to be exalted, imaginative, even fantastic. The limitations of Maeterlinck's subject-matter, and the thinness of his philosophy, should not blind us to the real service which " The Blue Bird " performed for the theatre all over Europe. It showed that the " fairy play " need not be a tasteless pantomime ; that it might itself be literature, and could provide, for the scenic artist, opportunities such as the realistic play can never offer.

Once the pretence of illusion had been given up, it was an easy step back to the formal stage ; and permanent or semi-permanent settings had one great benefit in the eyes of the producer : they were cheap. All the complicated machines which had been invented to increase the opportunities of the theatre in reality reduced them, for they tended, with the elaboration of scenery which they encouraged, to make production so costly that only those plays could be staged which seemed certain of success. Experiment was made impossible ; yet it is only by constant experiment that the theatre can flourish.

The most famous of the formal stages is (or rather was, for the enterprise came to an end two years ago) the one established by Jacques Copeau and Louis Jouvet at the Vieux Colombier in Paris. Copeau had only a little hall to work in, and not much money, and his architectural stage was worked out as the result of actual grappling with the problems of production. The absence of proscenium arch, the proscenium doors at the side, the balcony at the back, and the steps at the front of the stage, enabled him to play both Shakespeare and Molière with a swiftness and intimacy unknown to the commercial theatre. Copeau's stage became the model for others of the same kind. He himself transformed the Garrick Theatre in New York, and Louis Jouvet presided over the birth of the Marais Theatre at Brussels.

The " skeleton setting," by which some of the advantages of the architectural stage can be retained in the ordinary theatre, has been especially successful in the hands of some of the Dutch designers. In Holland, the new spirit in stage decoration dates from 1908 when Verkade began his experiments with the " cadre fixe." His répertoire ranged from Shakespeare to Schnitzler, and from Shaw to Sheridan. During 1917 and 1918, when he was in charge of the Royal Dutch Theatre, his chief designer was H. Th. Wijdeweld, who was particularly successful with " The Merchant of Venice," " Don Carlos," and " Hamlet." Other Dutch designers who have made good use of the skeleton setting are Lensvelt, especially in " Gijsbrecht van Aemstel " and " The Merry Wives of Windsor," Roelvink with his " Merchant of Venice," and Roland Holst in " Lucifer." M. A. van der Lugt Melsert made interesting use of screens for the production of " Life is a Dream." The interest

of the Dutch in the art of the theatre was shown by the immense exhibition organised in Amsterdam six years ago. This was the collection which was transferred bodily to London, and housed at South Kensington.

The country, however, where the theories of Appia, and the inspiration of Craig have borne most fruit is undoubtedly Germany, largely, perhaps, through the influence of one great producer, Reinhardt. The whole conception of the producer is something new in our attitude to the theatre. Craig was so anxious for unity that he wished for one man to do everything, design the scenes, control the actors, even write the play. He became impatient at last even with the actor, and wished to substitute for him the " übermarionette." Extreme as this view was, it was stimulating to workers in the theatre, and it did much to raise the status of the producer and make him, for a time at least, the most important man in the theatre.

Reinhardt is the typical producer, and it is because he stands for such in the eyes of Europe that he is mentioned here, although as interesting things have been done in Germany by Jessner, by Fehling and by Weichert. But Reinhardt had a universality which none of these, perhaps, possesses, and he has moreover been invited to all the chief European capitals, and has left a trail of influence behind wherever he went. He began as an actor, interested himself in the artistic cabaret movement and founded a cabaret—" *Schall und Rauch* "—which developed into the Kleines Theater, with plays by Gorky, Wilde and Wedekind. His opportunity came when he was invited to succeed Lindau (the short-lived successor of Otto Brahm) at the Deutches Theater in Berlin. His production of " A Midsummer Night's Dream " made him famous, and opened the way for the German neo-romantic playwrights. No one has known better how to utilise the materials that lay to his hand and he is one of the few producers who have been really successful with the revolving stage. His chief scenic designer was Ernst Stern, but Roller, Orlik, Esler and Dietz also worked for him. He succeeded in forming a company of the best actors in Germany, and showed the breadth of his sympathy by a répertoire which embraced German and foreign classics, as well as the most modern plays. His method is one of bold stylisation, and it is because he does not ride any hobby-horse to death that he is able to handle such various material. On everything he imposes his own rhythm : the author must leave the producer scope, and the producer himself must not cramp the spontaneity of the actor. At the same time, there must be no " stars " playing the rest of the cast off the stage. While cruder in his ensemble effects than Stanislavsky, Reinhardt is yet careful to see that each actor fits into the picture, and does not spoil the symphony by blowing too loud on his own trumpet. How much more ready should the author be to hand his manuscript over to such a producer as Reinhardt, than to leave it to the mercies of an actor-manager, or of a group of " stars," gathered together haphazard and producing themselves by the light of nature ! The success of Reinhardt seems to demonstrate that the producer has come to stay. Germany, more than most countries, was able to breed rapidly a whole race of such men : Savitz and Klein at Munich, Fanto and Schumucher at Dresden. The system of subsidised theatres, and still more the existence of a serious theatre-going public, enabled bold experiments to be carried out without danger of too much loss. The universal method was to simplify

and to stylise, and some producers certainly pushed their desire for stylisation to extreme limits. Jessner's famous flight of steps, effective at first, lost point with too much repetition, and there was a general tendency to imagine that a stage device which had been successful in one play was capable of universal application.

In the period immediately following the War, the theories of " Der Sturm," the Berlin group of Expressionists, began to have an influence which, though vitalising, led to some extravagance. The effort to paint, not objects, but the emotions aroused by those objects in the mind of the artist, may possibly succeed in easel-pictures ; it is doomed to failure on the stage. Easel-painting interests such a small and, on the whole, cultured and sophisticated public, that it can risk much more in the way of abstraction and obscurity than is possible in the would-be popular art of the theatre. All the aesthetic fashions of Paris have found their echo on the stage, most of all, perhaps, cubism ; but there is obviously a limit beyond which stylisation in scene-painting becomes absurd. The marionette theatre has great possibilities for stylising even the forms of the doll-actors, but, on the ordinary stage, the human body refuses to reinforce the unity of a cubist background. The only logical solution, as M. Xavier de Courville has remarked, is that of the two Russian ballets, " Parade " and " Chout," in which the dancers were given the appearance of figures in a cubist picture. But this is only possible, or desirable, in certain special productions, such as those two named. Nothing whatever is gained by playing Shakespeare before a curtain covered with forms which are neither recognisable enough to contribute to the emotion of the play, nor quiet enough to provide a neutral, undistracting background.

Expressionism, however, had its value in widening scope of both subject and treatment ; although some of the German Expressionists chose to include many things which most people would rather see excluded. The mere dredging of the unconscious cannot produce art, although it is equally true that it is from something deeper and wider than the conscious intelligence that art of any kind gains its power. Expressionism taught both playwrights and producers that naturalism was nothing but a convention, to be used when it proved useful, but not otherwise ; that there was no reason why characters should not speak their thoughts, that the aside was not necessarily absurd, and that the stage can be a fitting frame for dreams, as well as a mirror of the surface world. Expressionism and the reaction against cumbrous scenery worked together in abolishing the tyranny of the three-act form ; and the cinema, by suggestion and analogy, made it possible for the dramatist to construct his play in twenty scenes, if he wished it, as the Elizabethans had done before him. Dream and reality can be mingled at will, and ghosts can appear without any creaking of stage machinery, for the mood can be induced in which ghosts seem possible, and there is no reason to do more than suggest an actual apparition. To a certain extent Expressionism, as a literary event, was a compound of perverted sex, war-weariness, and general disillusionment, in the years that followed the Armistice, but its effect on the theatre was a revelation of infinite possibilities, for which the dramatist of the future cannot but be grateful.

In these, as they might be called, revolutionary movements, Reinhardt has

taken little if any part. His contribution to the freedom of the theatre has sprung naturally from his early conception of the different sizes of theatre needed for different productions. In charge of the Deutches Theater, seating about a thousand, he wished for a more intimate theatre, and also for a larger arena where broader effects might be presented to an audience of five thousand. These two desires gave birth to the Kleines Theater and to the Grosses Schauspielhaus, but long before the latter was built he had made use of the " circus-theatre " for such productions as " Oedipus Rex " and " The Miracle." In both of these he endeavoured to bring the players and the audience into the closest possible contact, he abolished the proscenium, he distributed some of his actors among the spectators, and he strove to make the emotion of his public not so much an echo of the emotion on the stage as the driving force behind it. He wished to re-establish that unity of actor and audience, of priest and people, if you will, which was broken when the theatre emerged from the portals of the church.

This endeavour has been carried still further by Meyerhold in Russia. Meyerhold worked for years under Stanislavsky at the Moscow Art Theatre, became dissatisfied with the methods of realism, left for a time, returned to take charge of the " Studio " theatre, and then sought, in the theatre of Vera Kommissarjevska, a wider field for his talents, and a better chance of developing his own ideas. In the naturalistic theatre, even when it is concerned with fantastic plays like " The Blue Bird," an effort is always made to pretend that the audience is not there. The actors go about their business (such is the theory) as if the imaginary fourth wall were really built, and as if there were not hundreds of pairs of eyes fixed on their every movement. This seemed to Meyerhold to be the negation of acting. He wanted the theatre to be frankly theatrical, for the actor to take the audience into his confidence, not with a sly wink as Hawtrey used to do, but freely and openly. The actor came to seem very important to Meyerhold, and the audience not less so. A captious critic might complain that this lands us once more in the middle of Bernhardtism, but Meyerhold is subtler than that. He likes to draw inspiration from the Commedia dell 'Arte, from the days when the actor stood on two planks at a fair, and improvised his part from a skeleton scenario. He would like to banish literature from the theatre, but his practice is less extreme than his theory, and the beauty and force of his productions are generally acknowledged. He has remained one of the most vital figures in the artistic life of Russia since the revolution.

Another attempt to bring actor and spectator into harmony has been made by Evreinov, with his theory of " monodrama." As this is a matter of literature rather than of scenic design it will be sufficient to touch on it here. Evreinov's theory was that the whole drama should be staged as if it were seen through the eyes of the principal character, with whom it was thought, the spectator would then identify himself, and so get from the play the utmost possible exaltation and cleansing. This method, it would seem, is only interesting if the principal character is abnormal. The distorted world of his imagination can be used to reflect light on his own soul ; but even this can be done much more completely on the screen than on the stage. If the principal character is normal, Evreinov's " monodrama " proves to be not very different from old-fashioned melodrama, where everything that happens

is seen through the eyes of the innocent and slightly simple-minded heroine. The whole advantage of being an author, a dramatist, is to be able to explore the psychology of both hero and villain, and to set in motion their conflicting wills.

A more important innovator, from the point of view of stage design, is Taïrov. After the Revolution in Russia, Futurism became an official art, and artists of the advanced schools found wonderful scope for their talents, not only in the theatre, but in organising popular manifestations, military reviews and open air fêtes. The destruction and disorder which was everywhere apparent gave birth to " Constructivism," which was partly the result of a desire to reorganise and stabilise life, and was partly an echo of the theories of Marinetti, the Italian Futurist. Men had no sooner convinced themselves of the dangers of mechanical civilisation, than they began to be enamoured of the æsthetic properties of machines. The machine, it was thought, was the symbol of the Present, and even theatrical *décor* ought to stress the dominance of pulleys and wheels and pistons. " Constructivism " for Taïrov, developed into a system of stage scaffolding, and the various actions of a play took place at different levels, up flights of wooden steps, across ladders, or on little jutting platforms far above the stage. Decoration was reduced to the frankly symbolic, to an almost mathematical abstraction. For certain modern plays, especially those which are assumed to take place in a workshop or factory, Constructivism may be very effective, but it is hardly a universal formula, and has indeed been already abandoned by some of its chief exponents.

Another endeavour to find such a formula, at least for the more imaginative kind of dramatic production, has recently been made in Italy. This is the Tetiteatro of Alberto Martini, and its peculiarity is the use of water, surrounding the stage like a moat. The acoustic properties of water are well known, and with modern lighting resources the surface of the miniature lake which lies between stage and audience can no doubt be made to yield the most magical effects. The stage itself, an island, or rather a peninsular jutting towards the audience, is fixed and permanent, the front and sides completely open, while the back can be closed by a curtain or backcloth. Drawbridges, or flights of steps can be constructed to give access to the actors, and if necessary islands established at various points in the lake. The central stage is set in various ways for different productions. It can be built up like a central rock, with different levels on which the actions of the play can take place. It lends itself admirably to some modified form of *Jessner-treppen*. The form of the Tetiteatro compels a certain stylisation, although it is conceivable that such a play as "The Merchant of Venice " might be presented realistically, if such were the producer's wish. While the main action takes place on the central stage, subsidiary actions may be played on the islands, and change of place can be indicated without change of *décor*. In fact something like the mediaeval multiple setting is made possible without the bareness of that convention.

There are certain obvious difficulties in constructing such a theatre indoors. The lake must be more than a mere ditch if it is to be effective, and the need of ample space seems to make it more suitable for an outdoor spectacle, somewhere in the south of Europe, where the climate is a little less fickle than

it is in England.* The actual *décors* designed by Martini show high imaginative power, and with proper lighting there is little doubt that a Greek tragedy, for example, could be presented with tremendous force. Wagner's music dramas, so often the point of departure for scenic innovators, provide Martini with a great opportunity. For the " magic fire " in the " Valkyrie," he proposes to set in motion under the water, by means of an electrical apparatus, a reflection of conventionalised flames. In fact there is no effect of the new lighting which would not be intensified by the intervening water, and no sound which would not reach the audience more resonantly. Martini would also use the Tetiteatro as a platform for orchestral music, and he has designed settings for Debussy, Strauss, Stravinsky and Beethoven. The scheme is typical of the many that have been propounded in recent years with the avowed object of restoring unity to the theatre.

The salient facts which emerge from a study of the history of the last two decades are : the perfecting of theatrical machinery, and the reaction against it ; the rise of the producer to supreme power in the theatre ; the appearance of the theatrical designer, who is neither a mere scene-painter, in the old sense, nor an artist called in from outside because of his reputation for easel-pictures ; the abolition of so-called naturalism ; and the enormous extension of the subject-matter of possible plays. When one considers the restrictions which have hampered dramatists in the past—the conventions of tragedy, the conventionalities of melodrama, the fanaticism of the realists, how wide by contrast seems the scope of the modern writer for the theatre ! There is no subject however sordid, which he may not lift to grandeur, and no dream however fantastic, which, thanks to a frank theatricality, cannot be played upon the stage. Without losing any of the modern subtlety of analysis, the dramatist can reach back to the universality of the mediaeval mystery.

Much depends, of course, upon our conception of what the theatre should be. It is difficult for ardent reformers to see any good whatever in what they call the commercial stage, and yet it is the producers of revues who have done most to familiarise the British public with the triumphs of Continental scenic design. It is a not unworthy function merely to amuse, and if it be objected that many London plays serve no other conceivable purpose than to sooth the digestion of the tired business man, it may be answered that the business man's digestion is not without importance in a mercantile state. If the stage touches the church on one hand it touches less reputable places on the other, nor can it ever be different, for if the theatre is immortal, human nature is not less so. Those who scour Europe too eagerly in search of the new spirit are apt to find nothing but the old flesh.

Yet the theatre might be so much more than, too often, it seems content to be. How few, even of the most successful plays, have anything at all to offer to the spirit of man ! So rare is it to be profoundly moved by a theatrical performance that we have almost forgotten the exhilaration of the Elizabethans,

*A temporary Water-Theatre was among the attractions of the German Theatre Exhibition held at Magdeburg from May to September this year. The stage consisted of a round wooden platform anchored in the middle of an artificial lake. Nothing ambitious was attempted, but dances and gymnastic displays were given after dark ; and with coloured searchlights from the bank playing upon the participants, and reflected in the intervening water, gave some hint of what such a theatre might become in the hands of a great Producer.

the sustained enthusiasm of the dramatic guilds, the religious exaltation of the Greeks. To them, to all these, the theatre was not the amusement of an hour, but the gateway to a fuller life, not a way of passing the time, but a foretaste of Eternity. Before the porch of the cathedral, as in the theatre of Dionysus, men felt themselves absorbed into the larger being of the community, reunited into the fullness of the God.

Harmony, Unity, the Communion of the Saints! Have they gone for ever with the triumph of the conscious intelligence? But that triumph is over. The retreat from the edge of that precipice is universal. All these attempts to make the theatre something more than a glorified dyspepsia tablet, are but part of a much larger movement. The finest intelligences of our time have begun to realise the limitations of intelligence; the future leaders of humanity have foresworn the exaggerations of humanism, and gone to school with the Schoolmen. Rationalism narrows the world to the individual, and the individual, finding his solitude unbearable, destroys himself. To believe in some kind of spiritual reality beyond ourselves is necessary to our very existence; and the life of Western Europe depends upon its ability to dig below the surface of its mechanised civilisation, and find the old wells of the Water of Life. It is often said that the theatre is born of a cult, is the child of religion. It would be truer to say that religion and drama were born together, are, in their origins, as indivisible as prayer and the words of prayer, as worship and its appropriate gesture. For it is in drama that the Gods become incarnate, or rather it is always the same God, who dies and rises again, suffers and is triumphant, Spirit of Corn and Wine, symbol of man's redemption.

The theatre might play, perhaps, a preponderant part in the saving of Europe and of mankind, and if, to the theatrical speculator, to the theatre manager, and even to too many actors, such a hope seems nothing but a fantastic dream, it is at least a dream which has inspired all the best that has been accomplished during the last twenty pregnant years of the theatre's history.

Dorothy Mullock

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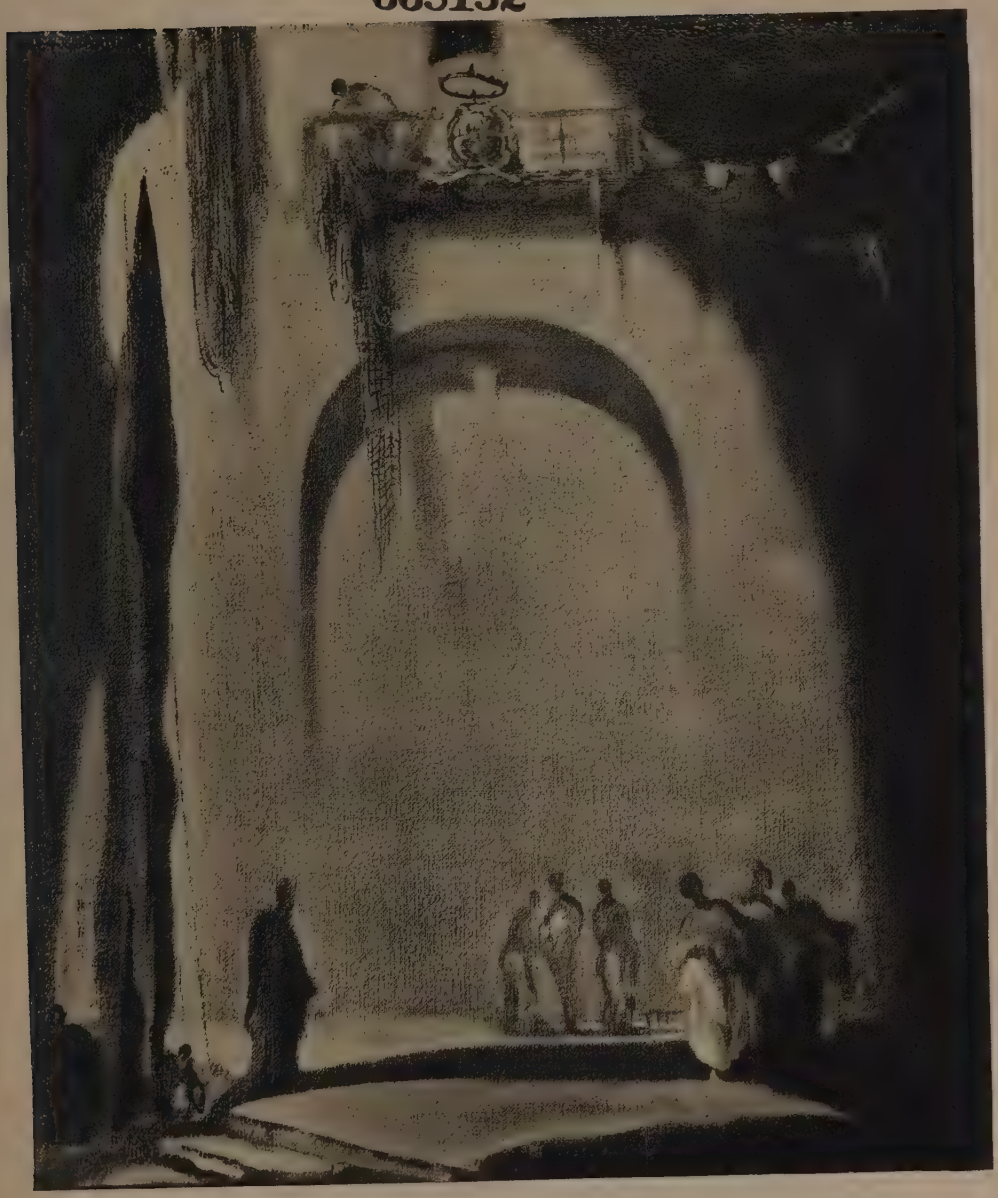
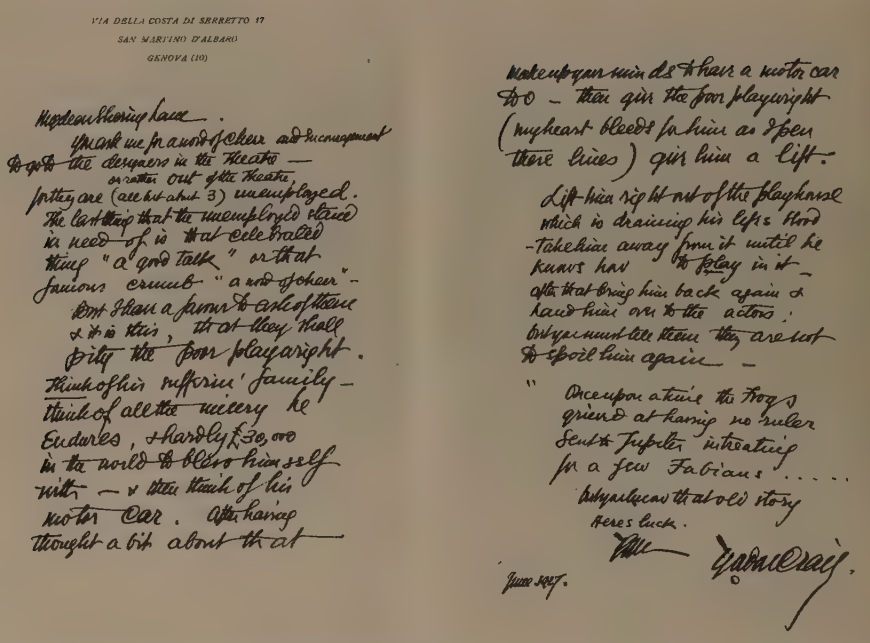
DESIGN FOR COSTUME IN BEN JONSON'S "THE DEVIL IS AN ASS"
BY LOVAT FRASER
(Property of Mrs. Lovat Fraser)
PLATE 1

665152



OIL PAINTING BY
JAMES PRYDE
PLATE 2



VIA DELLA COSTA DI SERRETTO 17 *SAN MARTINO D'ABARO GENOVA* (10)

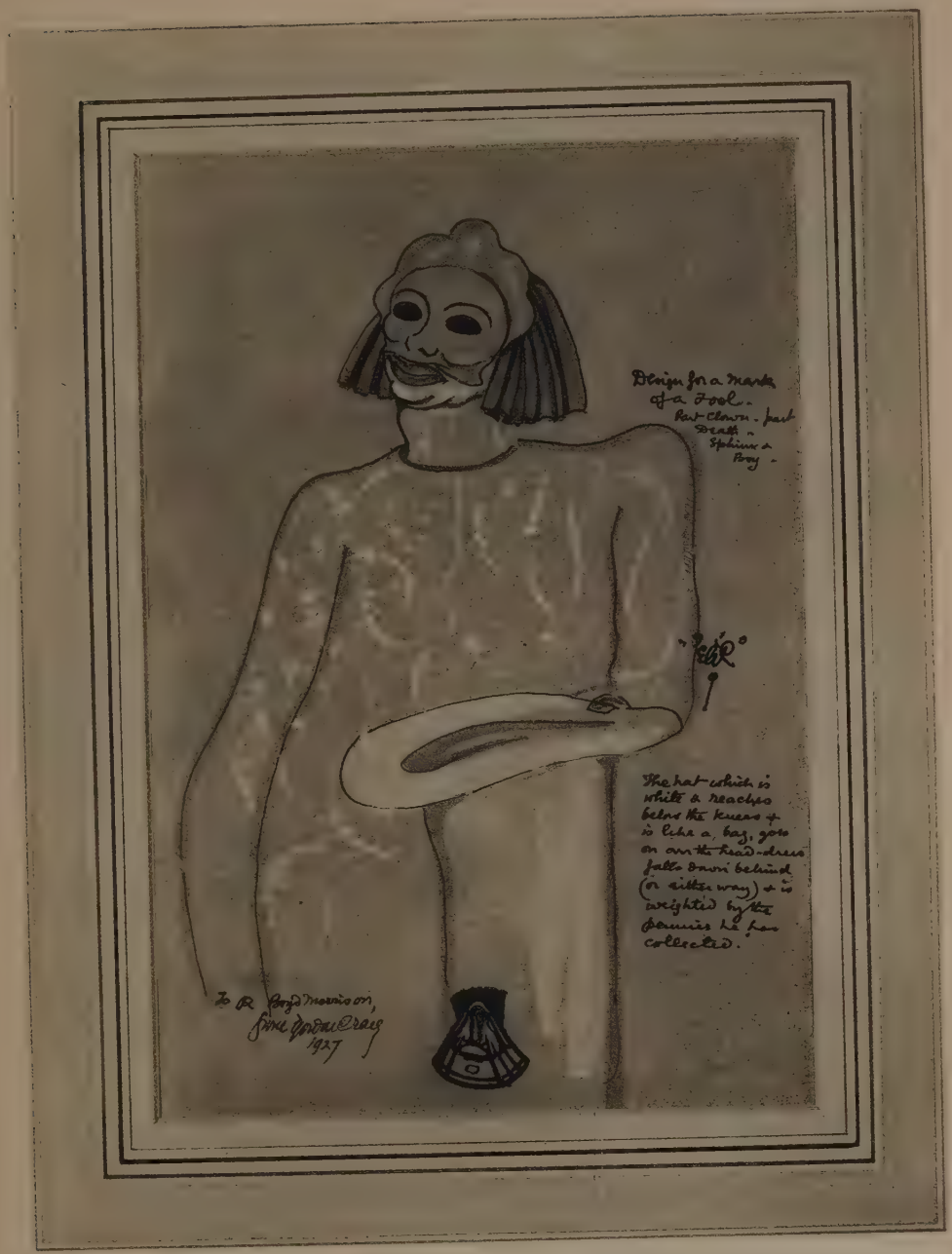
My dear Sheringham,

You ask me for a word of cheer and encouragement to go to the designers in the Theatre—or rather OUT of the Theatre, for they are (all but about 3) unemployed. The last thing that the unemployed stand in need of is that celebrated thing " a good talk " or that famous crumb " a word of cheer "—But I have a favour to ask of them and it is this, that they shall pity the poor playwright. *Think* of his sufferin' family—think of all the misery he endures, and hardly £30,000 in the world to bless himself with—and then think of his motor-car. After having thought a bit about that, make up your minds to have a motor car too—then give the poor playwright (my heart bleeds for him as I pen these lines) give him a lift. Lift him right out of the playhouse which is draining his life's blood —take him away from it until he knows how to *play* in it—after that bring him back again and hand him over to the actors: but you must tell them they are not to spoil him again—

" Once upon a time the Frogs grieved
at having no ruler sent to Jupiter
intreating for a few Fabians
...." but you know
that old story.
Here's luck.

JUNE, 1927 Yours GORDON CRAIG

FACSIMILE LETTER FROM EDWARD GORDON CRAIG
PLATE 3


Design for a mask of a Fool. Part Clown. part Death. Sphinx & Boy.
The hat-white is white & reaches below the knees & is like a bag, goes on over the head-dress falls down behind (or either way) & is weighted by the pennies he has collected.
To R. Boyd Morrison, Esq. Gordon Craig 1927

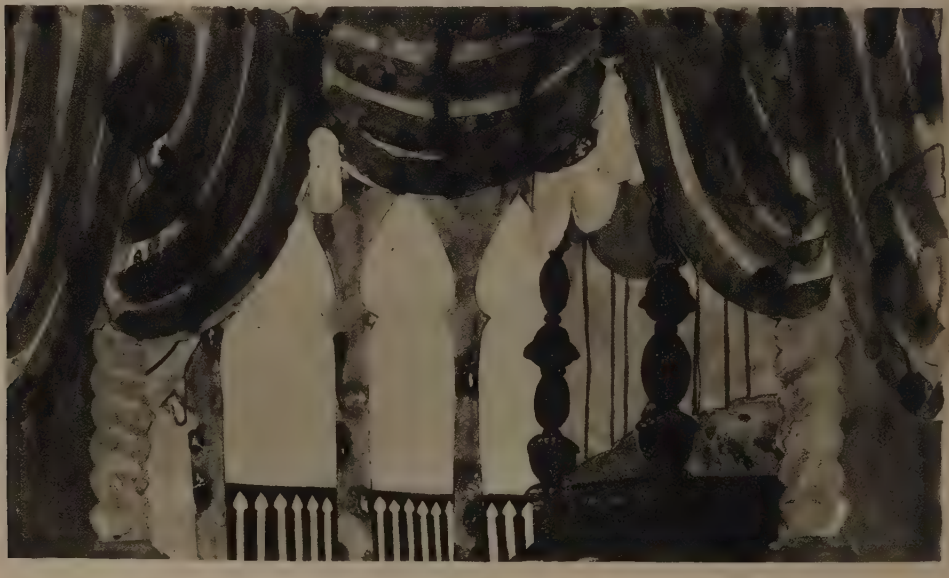
DESIGN FOR A MASK OF A FOOL—
PART CLOWN, PART DEATH—
SPHINX AND BOY
BY GORDON CRAIG
(Property of R. Boyd Morrison, Esq.)
PLATE 4

ORIGINAL PROJECT FOR "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"
(Property of Victor Hembrow, Esq.)

DESIGN FOR STAGE SET FOR "RIP VAN WINKLE"
BY LOVAT FRASER
(Property of Mrs Lovat Fraser.)
PLATE 5

PROJECTS FOR COSTUMES FOR "THE BEGGAR'S OPERA"
BY LOVAT FRASER
(Property of Victor Hembrow, Esq.)
PLATE 6

DESIGN FOR "THE FOREST"—A SCENE IN THACKERAY'S "THE ROSE AND THE RING" WYNDHAM'S THEATRE, 1923–24.



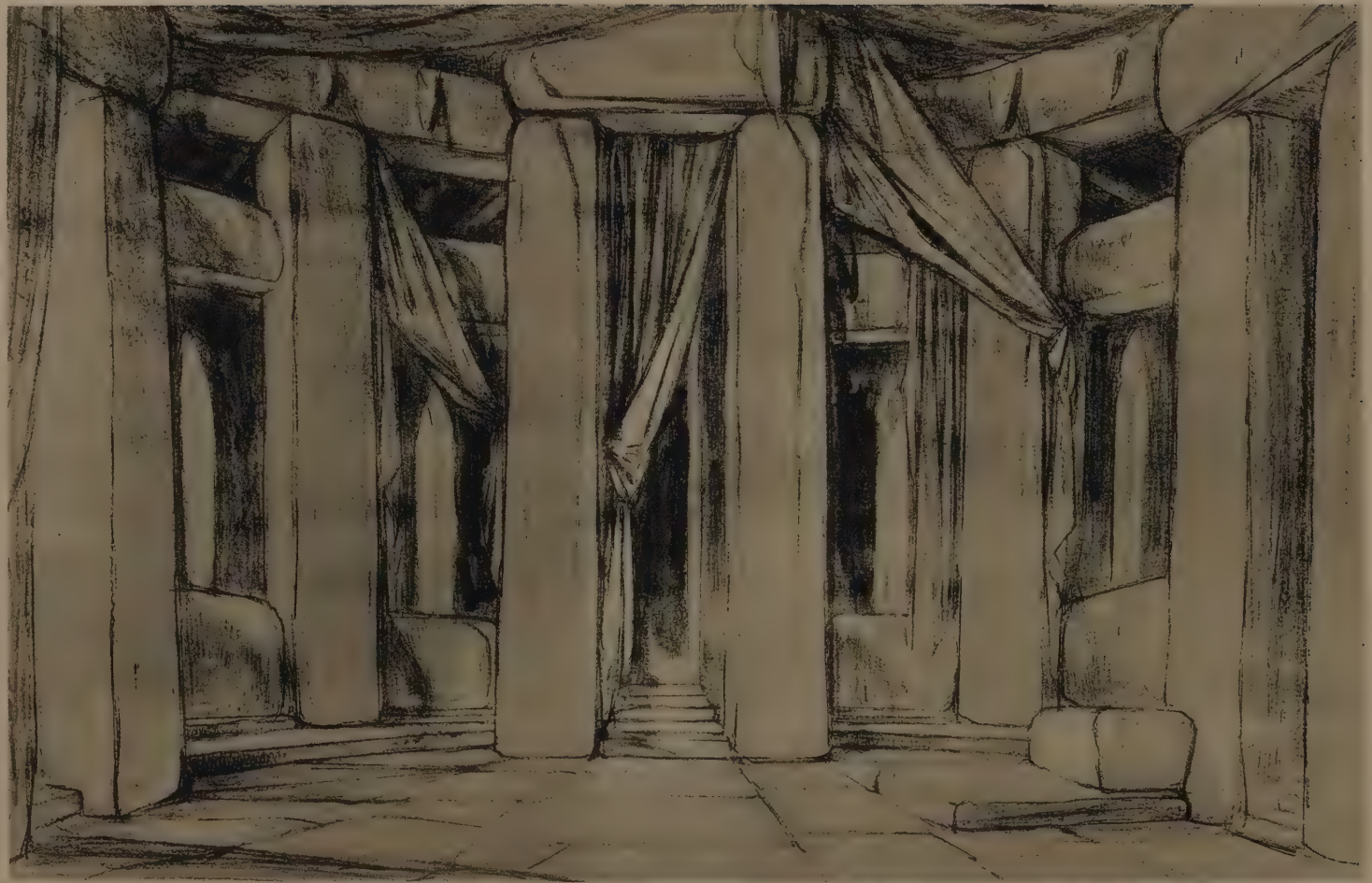
DESIGN FOR CUT CLOTH FOR WASHINGTON IRVING'S "THE PILGRIM OF LOVE" ACT I., SCENE II., THE PRINCESS' BEDROOM
BY AUBREY HAMMOND
PLATE 7

DESIGN FOR THE KING'S COSTUME IN WASHINGTON IRVING'S
"THE PILGRIM OF LOVE"
BY AUBREY HAMMOND
PLATE 8

DESIGN FOR COSTUME OF GENTLEMAN-IN-WAITING IN
"NOW AND THEN"—VAUDEVILLE THEATRE
BY AUBREY HAMMOND
PLATE 9

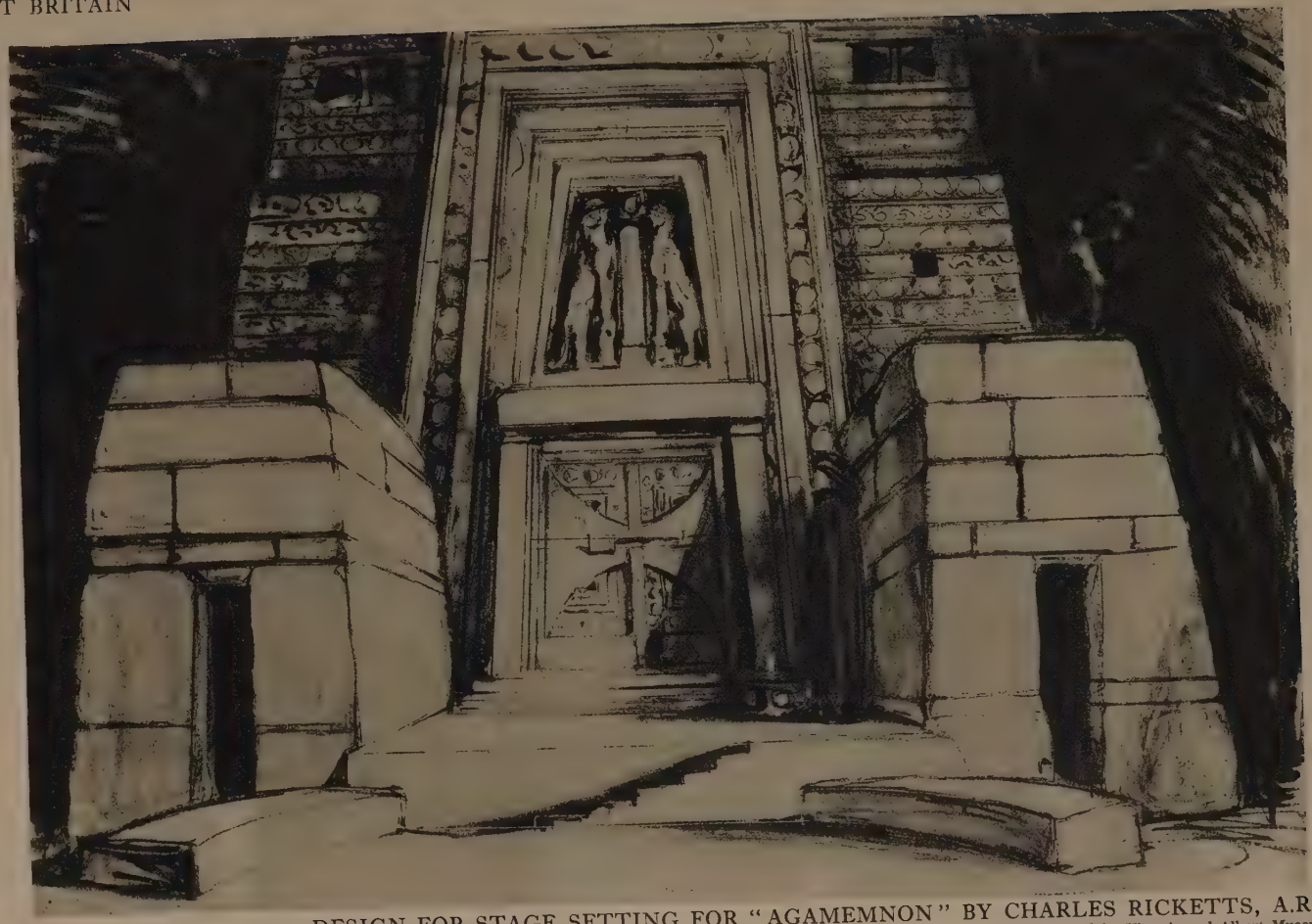
DESIGN FOR ROBES OF ARCHBISHOP OF NIDAROS IN "THE PRETENDERS"—ACT II. BY S. H. SIME
(Property of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)

PLATE 10



DESIGN FOR STAGE SETTING FOR "KING LEAR" BY CHARLES RICKETTS, A.R.A.
(Property of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)

PLATE 11



DESIGN FOR STAGE SETTING FOR "AGAMEMNON" BY CHARLES RICKETTS, A.R.A.
(Property of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)

PLATE 12

TRAVELLING CLOAK FOR "DOMITZIA" IN ROBERT BROWNING'S "LURIA"
BY NORMAN WILKINSON OF FOUR OAKS
(Property of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)
PLATE 13

COSTUME DESIGN FOR JOURDAIN IN "BOURGEOIS GENTILHOMME"
BY NORMAN WILKINSON OF FOUR OAKS
PLATE 14

THE OLD MAN AND THE YOUNG MAN—MASKS DESIGNED FOR W. B. YEATS' PLAY " THE HAWKES WELL " BY EDMUND DULAC
PLATE 15

STAGE MODEL FOR "THE DUENNA"
DESIGNED BY GEORGE SHERINGHAM AND
EXECUTED BY VICTOR HEMBROW
(Property of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)
PLATE 16

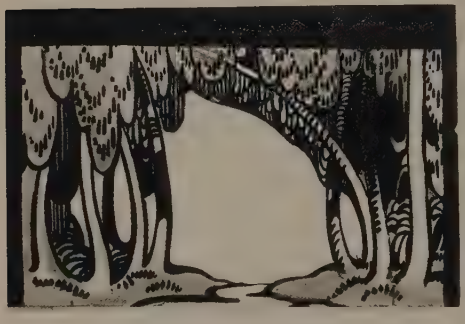
DESIGN FOR A VENETIAN TRAVELLING DRESS
BY GEORGE SHERINGHAM
PLATE 17

STAGE SETTING FOR "THE FAITHFUL SHEPHERDESS"
BY NORMAN WILKINSON OF FOUR OAKS
PLATE 18

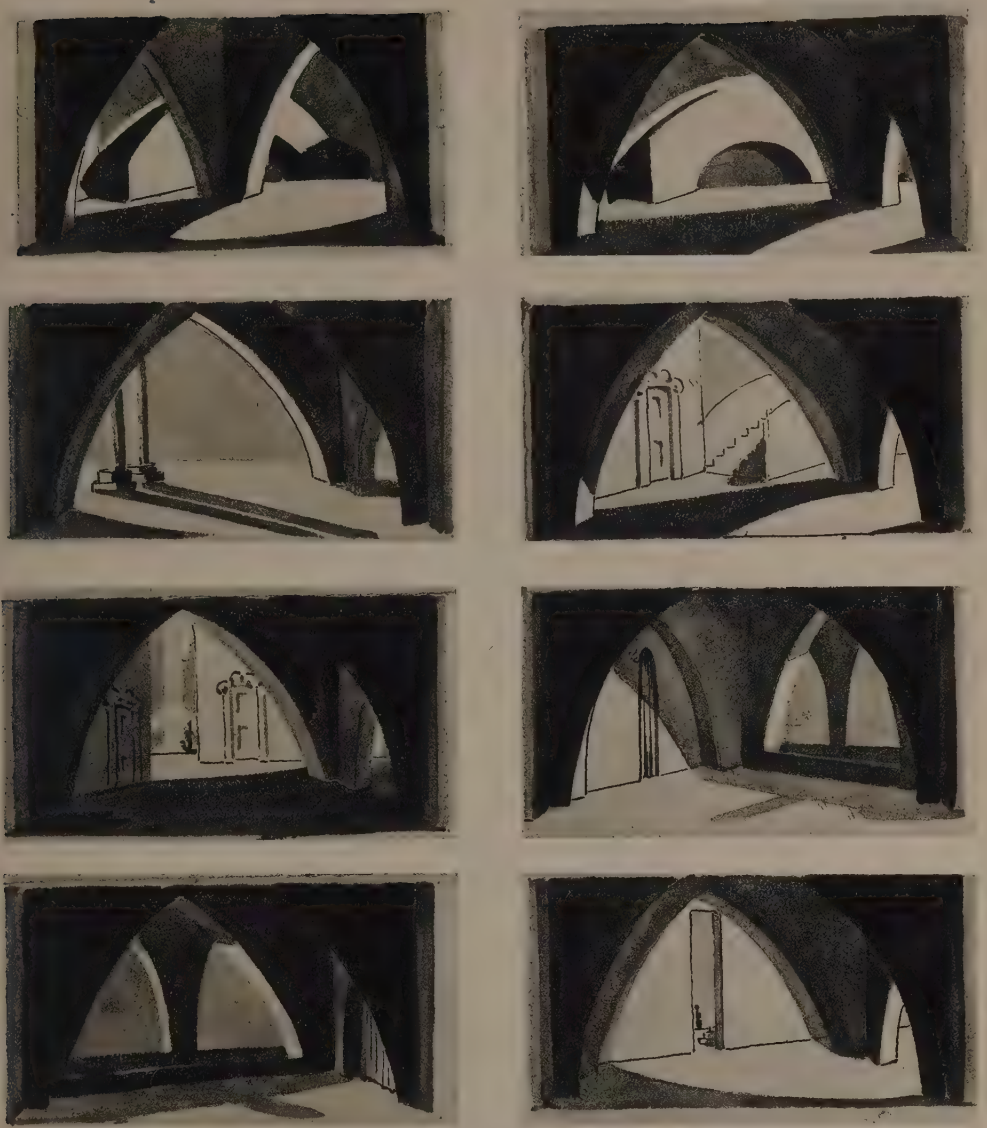
DESIGN FOR "MACBETH" BY VICTOR HEMBROW
PLATE 19

GREAT BRITAIN

DESIGN FOR WOODLAND SET



PROJECTS FOR WOODLAND SETS
BY VICTOR HEMBROW
PLATE 20



PROJECT FOR INTERCHANGEABLE SET
BY CICELY MEDLYCOTT
PLATE 21

DESIGN FOR NEGLIGÉ COSTUME FOR
"THE BEAUX STRATAGEM"
BY POLLY HILL CLARKE
PLATE 22

DESIGN FOR BALLET COSTUME FOR
"COLUMBINA" IN "A VENETIAN WEDDING"
BY LAURENCE IRVING
PLATE 23

Henry IV. First and third acts E. Macnaghten Hamilton

PLATE 24

DESIGNS FOR SETS OF PIRANDELLO'S "HENRY IVTH"
BY E. McKNIGHT KAUFFER
PLATE 25

DESIGN FOR IRISH COSTUME
BY WILLIAM CONOR
PLATE 26

DESIGN FOR COSTUME
OF QUEEN ELIZABETH
BY TOM HESLEWOOD
PLATE 27

MODEL OF STAGE SET
FOR "HENRY V"
BY TOM HESLEWOOD
PLATE 28

"BACK TO METHUSELAH"
DESIGNED BY PAUL SHELVING
PLATE 29

"BACK TO METHUSELAH"
DESIGNED BY PAUL SHELVING
PLATE 30

COSTUME DESIGN FOR "IRISH WAR PIPER"
FOR RUDDICK MILLAR'S "SIR BRYAN AND THE BANQUET"
BY R. BOYD MORRISON
PLATE 31

BARBARA MORLEY HORDER'S PRODUCTION OF
" MINNIKIN AND MANNIKIN "
DRAWN BY PAUL ROTHA
PLATE 32

DESIGN FOR A REVUE COSTUME
BY OLIVER MESSEL
PLATE 33

DESIGN FOR COSTUME IN
"ONE DAM THING AFTER ANOTHER"
BY DORIS ZINKEISEN
PLATE 34

COSTUME DESIGN FOR THE REVUE "STILL DANCING"
BY DORIS ZINKEISEN
PLATE 35

COSTUME DESIGN
PHILLIPA GEE
PLATE 36

COSTUME OF 1790
PAUL ROTHA
PLATE 37

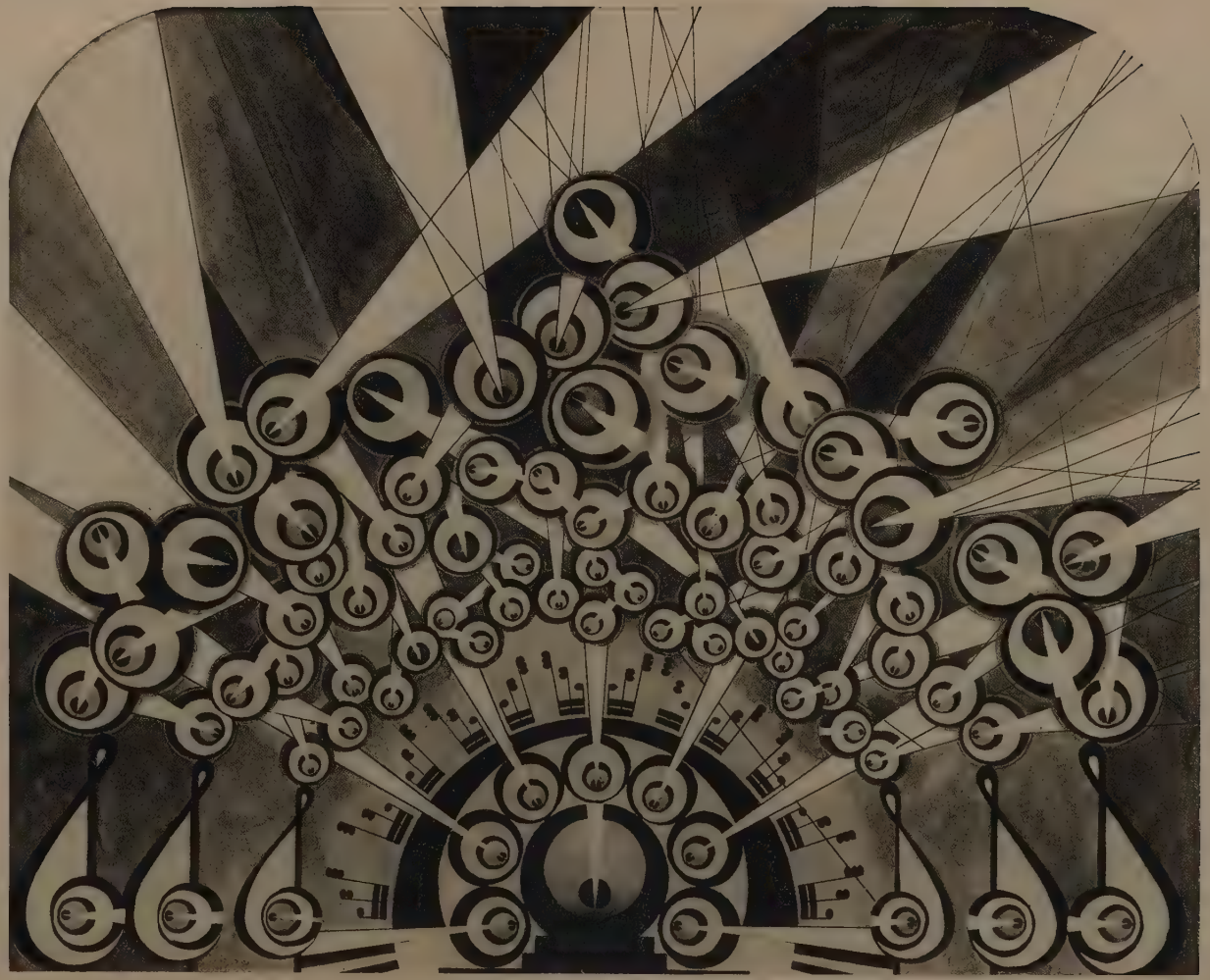
COSTUME OF 1822–23
PAUL ROTHA
PLATE 38

A GARDEN SET
REGINALD BRILL
PLATE 39

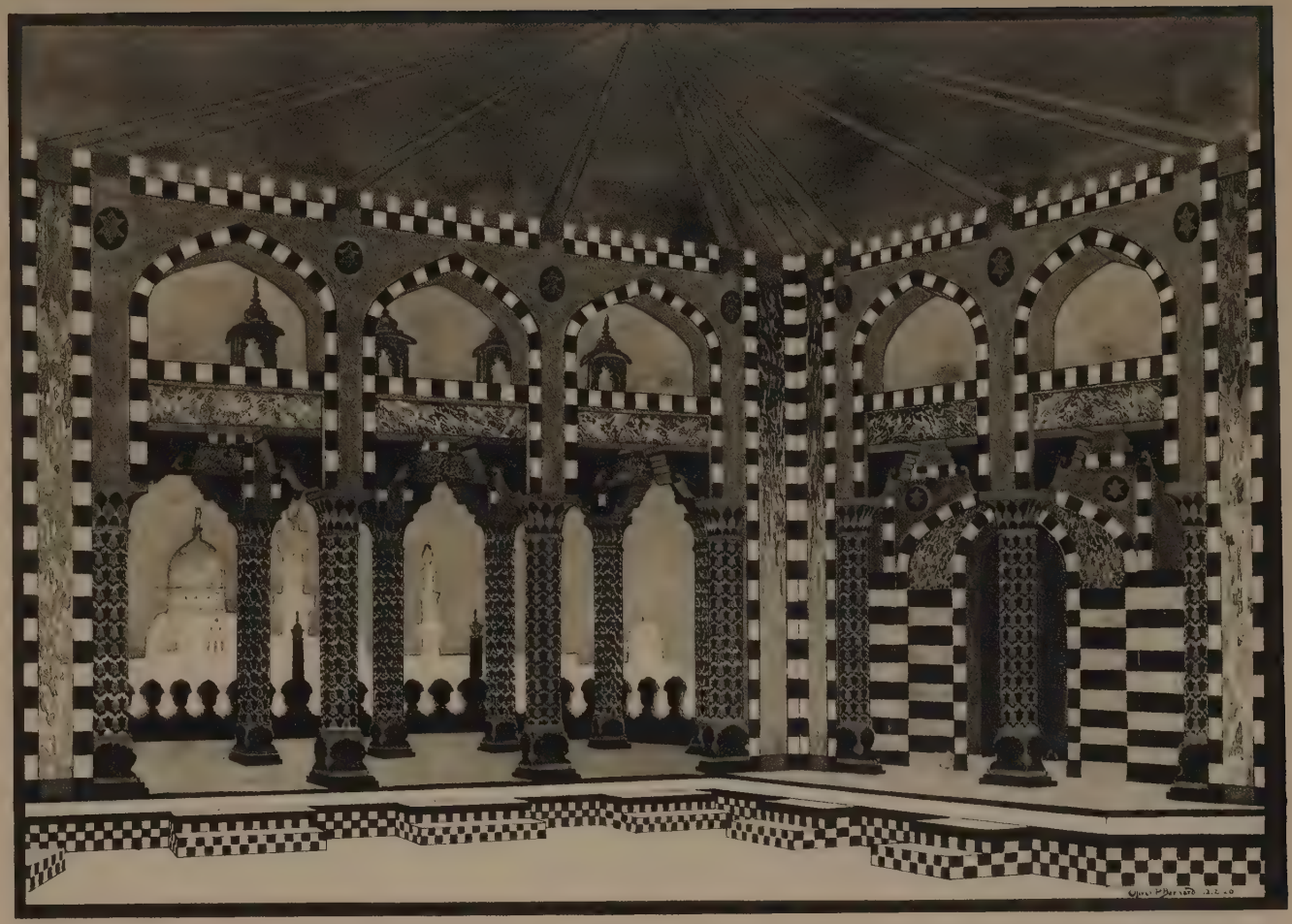
SCENE FOR ACT I. TRISTAN AND ISOLDE
ADRIAN ALLINSON
PLATE 40

COSTUME DESIGN
ADRIAN ALLINSON
PLATE 41

COSTUME DESIGN FOR
"THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE"
RANDOLPH SCHWABE
PLATE 42



"SONGS" ELEVATION DRAWING FOR STAGE SETTING FOR A REVUE
OLIVER BERNARD
PLATE 43



PERSPECTIVE OF STAGE SETTING FOR AN EASTERN BALLET
OLIVER BERNARD
PLATE 44

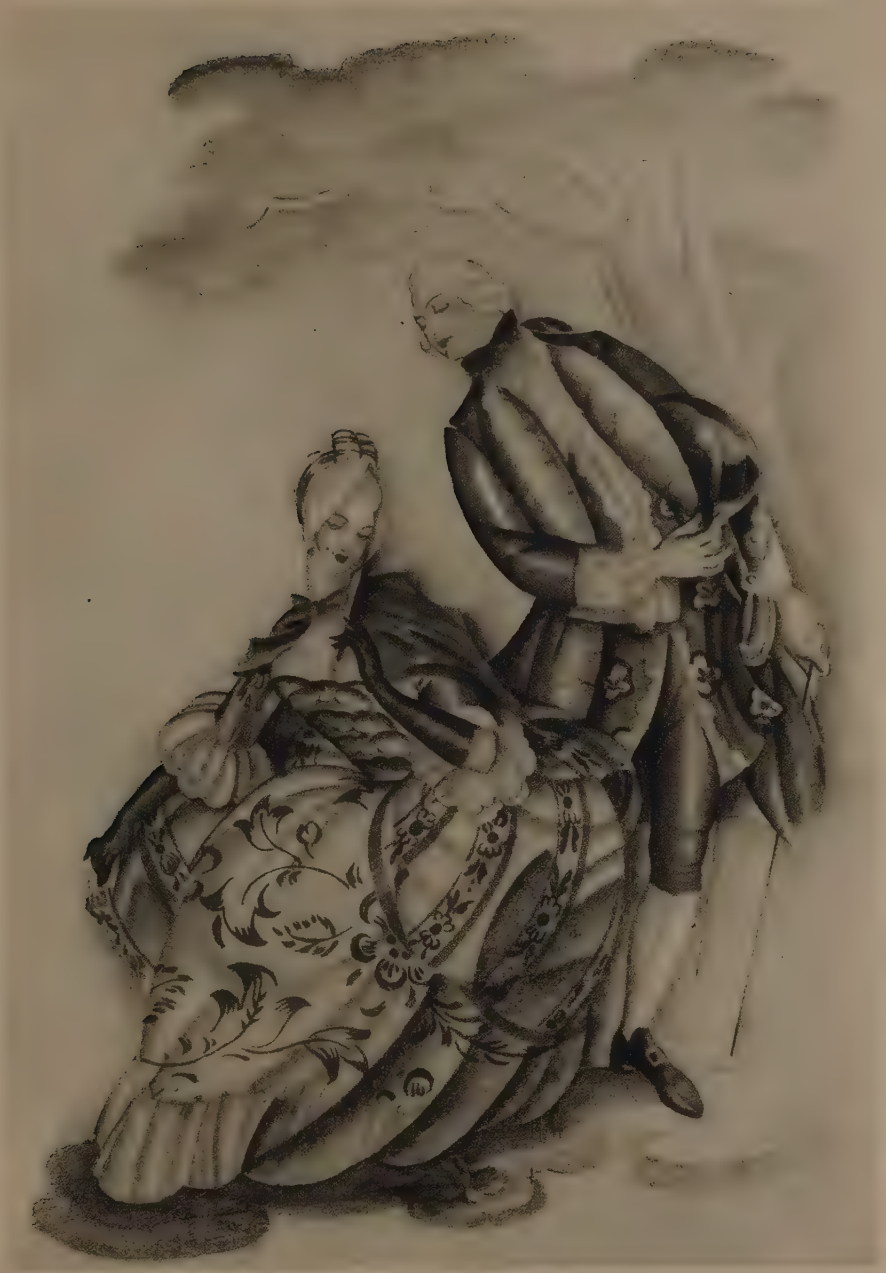
DESIGN FOR A BACK CLOTH
CECIL BEATON
PLATE 45

DESIGN FOR CABARET
JOHN ARMSTRONG
PLATE 46

STAGE SET
PAUL NASH
PLATE 47

STAGE SET FOR PLAY BY W. B. YEATS
CERIL SALKELD
PLATE 48

COSTUME DESIGN FOR "WOMAN OF THE SIDHE"
NORAH McGUINNESS
PLATE 49



EIGHTEENTH CENTURY COSTUMES
VERA WILLOUGHBY
Courtesy of D. Marshall & Co., Ltd.
PLATE 50

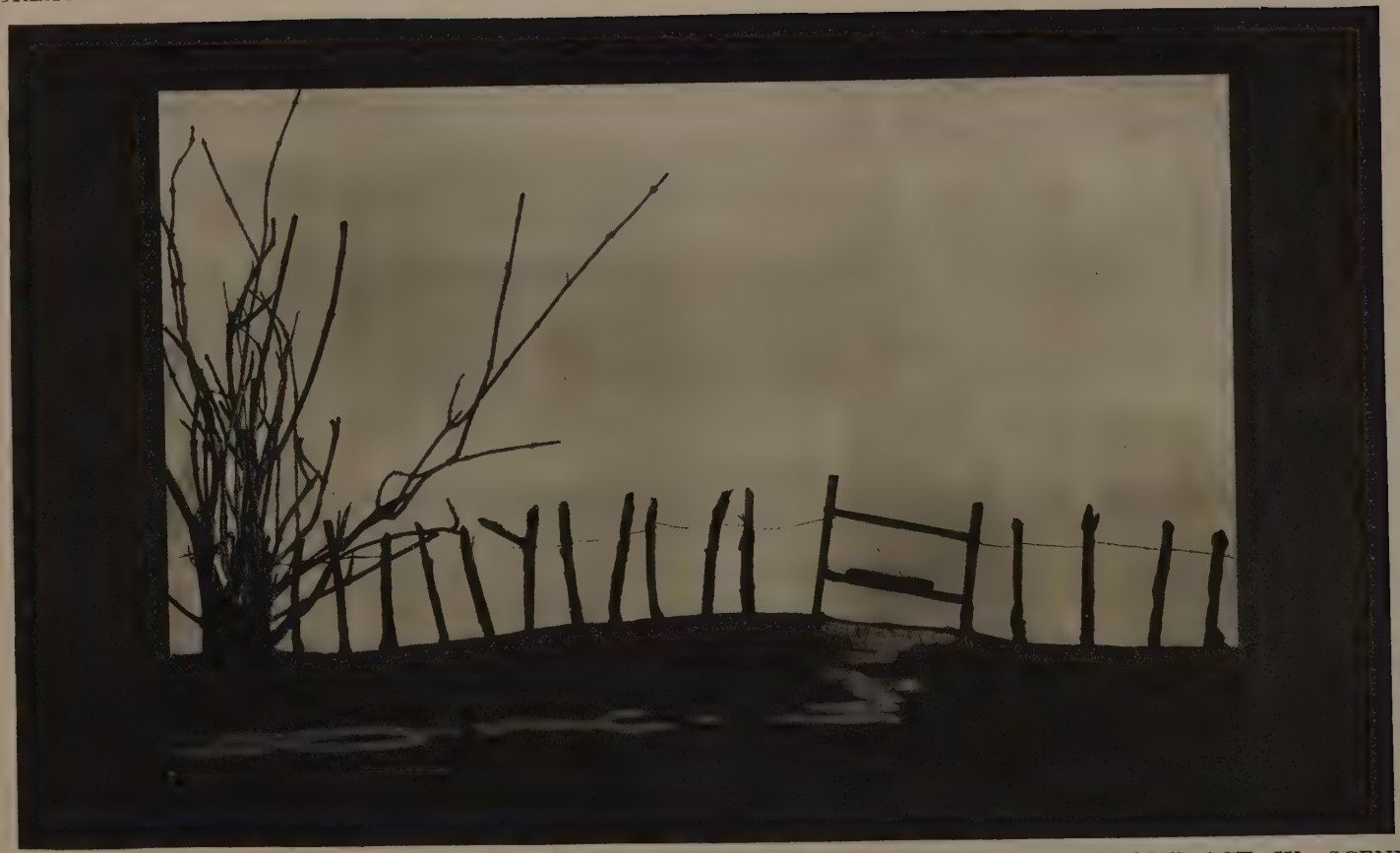
COSTUME FOR DANCER
REGINALD LEEFE
PLATE 51

COSTUME DESIGN
BY REGINALD LEEFE
PLATE 52

COSTUME DESIGN FOR A DANCER
BY REGINALD LEEFE
PLATE 53

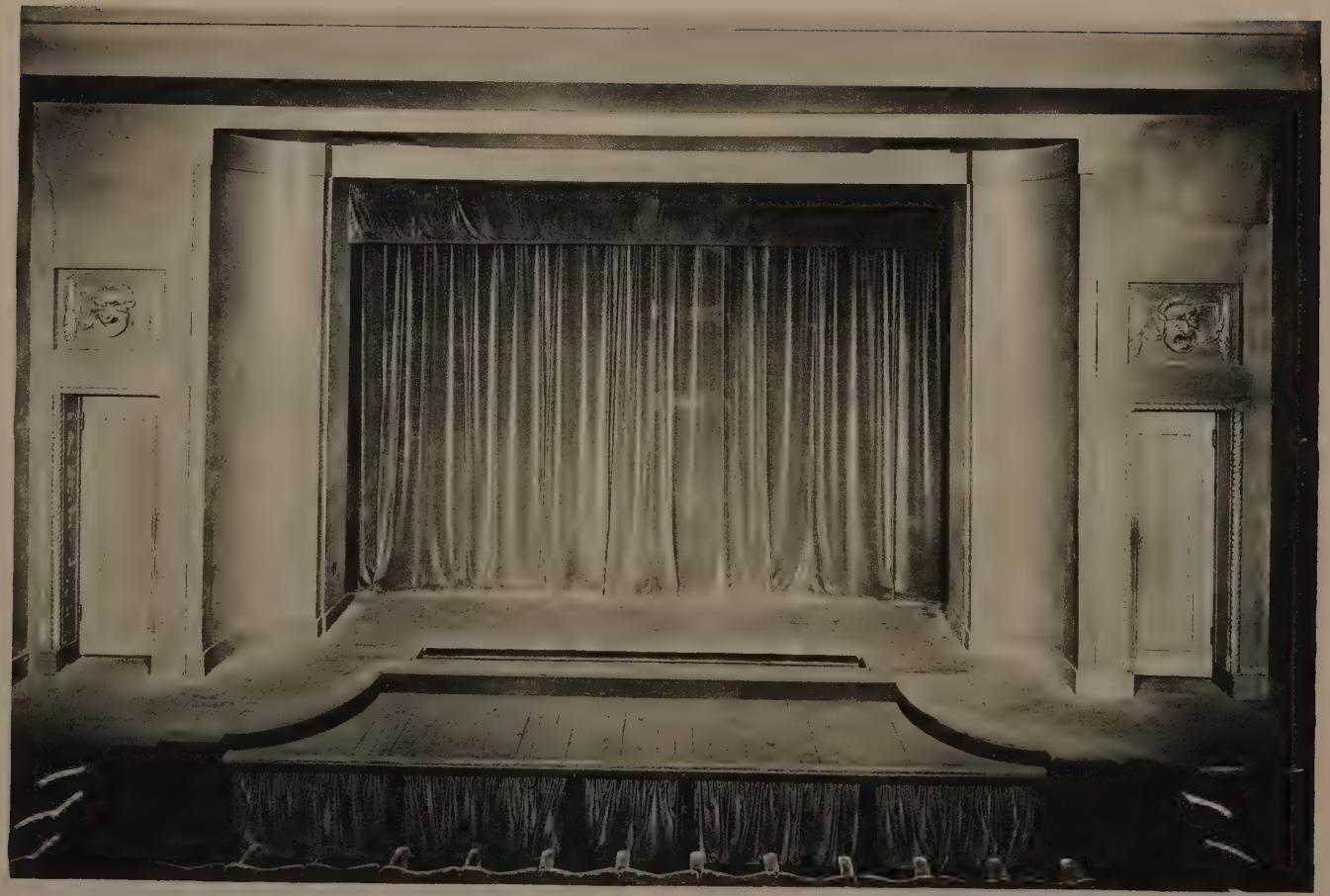
DESIGN FOR "CYMBELINE," ACT I. BY ALBERT RUTHERSTON
(Property of the Victoria and Albert Museum.)
PLATE 54

MODEL FOR "LE MARIAGE FORCÉ"
BY ALBERT RUTHERSTON
PLATE 55



MODEL FOR "THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR," ACT IV, SCENE I,
"A FIELD NEAR FROGMORE" (EVERYMAN THEATRE, HAMPSTEAD)
DESIGNED, MODELLED AND LIT BY A. C. ENSOR
PLATE 56

SCENE FROM "THE INSECT PLAY," FESTIVAL THEATRE, CAMBRIDGE
DESIGNED BY MICHAEL HAMPTON
PLATE 57



THE ARTS THEATRE, LONDON
DESIGNED BY P. MORLEY HORDER
PLATE 58

BACKCLOTH DESIGN FOR BALLET "THE POSTMAN"
BY DUNCAN GRANT
PLATE 59

CURTAIN FOR KING'S THEATRE, EDINBURGH
BY M. R. CAIRD
PLATE 60

PROJECT FOR THE CASTLE IN "MACBETH" BY LAURENCE BRADSHAW
PLATE 61

MODEL WITH SCENE AND FIGURES FOR
"THE BLIND BOY"
BY B. POLLOCK OF HOXTON
PLATE 62

GREAT BRITAIN

Scene 12. POLLOCK'S SCENES IN WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT. No.9 Trick Scene
BRILL, FISHMONGER
COFFEE
CUP
HOUSE
Newfoundland Salt
London, Published by B. Pollock, 73, Hoxton Street, Hoxton

BACKCLOTH FOR MODEL THEATRE
"WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT"
BY B. POLLOCK, OF HOXTON
PLATE 63

(1) ACT DROP FOR "WHEN CRUMMLES PLAYED"
(2) BACKCLOTH FOR "HARLEQUINADE"
DESIGNED BY JEAN CAMPBELL
PLATE 64

"GOOSELAND." DESIGN FOR THE PANTOMIME "MOTHER GOOSE" AT THE LONDON HIPPODROME BY MARC-HENRI AND LAVERDET
PLATE 65

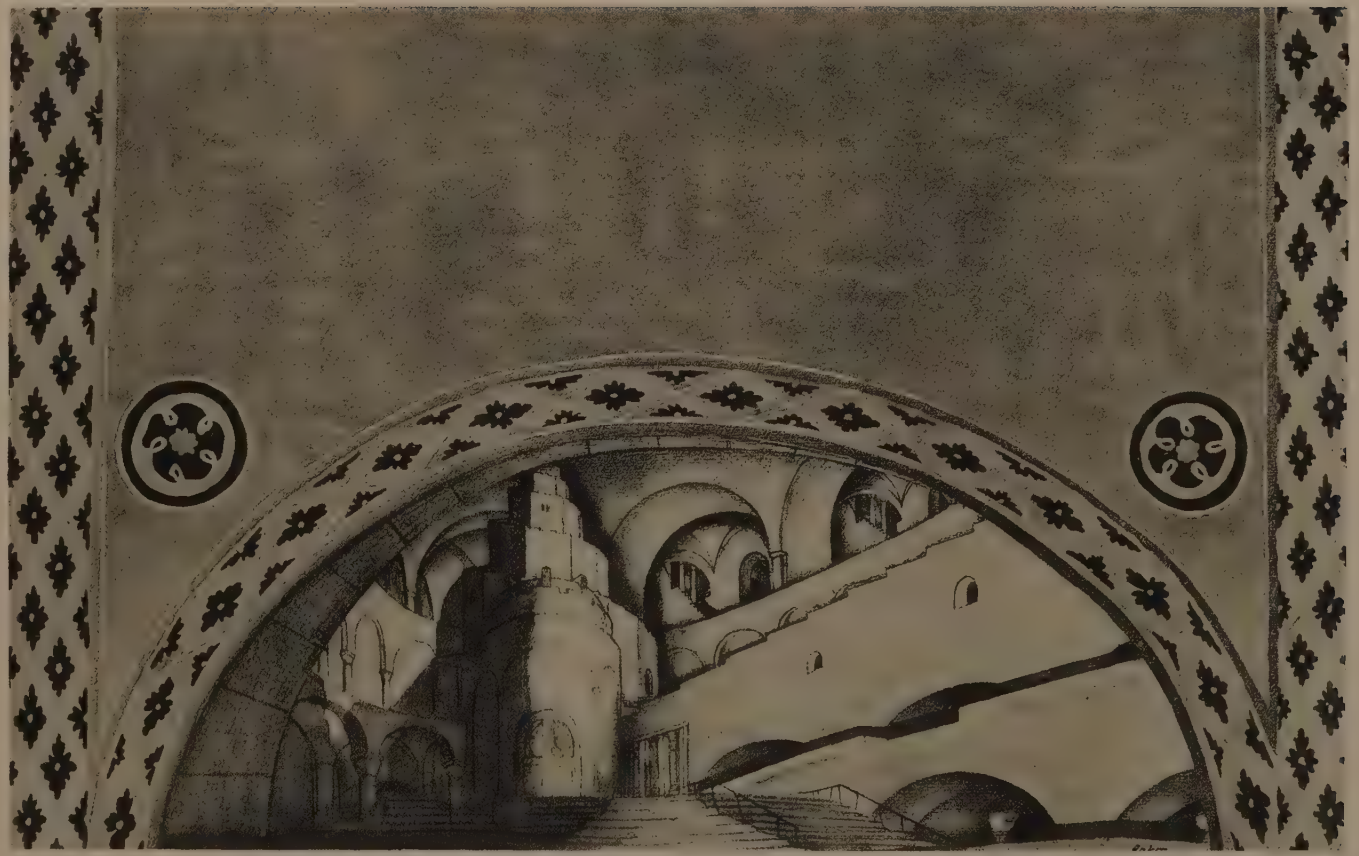
DESIGN FOR "PEGGY ANN," DALY'S THEATRE
BY MARC-HENRI AND LAVERDET
PLATE 66

DESIGN FOR COSTUME OF
PRINCE GIVDON IN "LE COQ D'OR"
BY NATALIA GONTCHAROVA
PLATE 67

DESIGN FOR COSTUME IN "LA LITURGIE"
BY NATALIA GONTCHAROVA
PLATE 68

DESIGN FOR A CABARET (RUSSIAN EATING HOUSE) BY VLADIMIR POLUNIN
PLATE 69

DESIGN FOR "LE COQ D'OR"
BY NATALIA GONTCHAROVA
PLATE 70



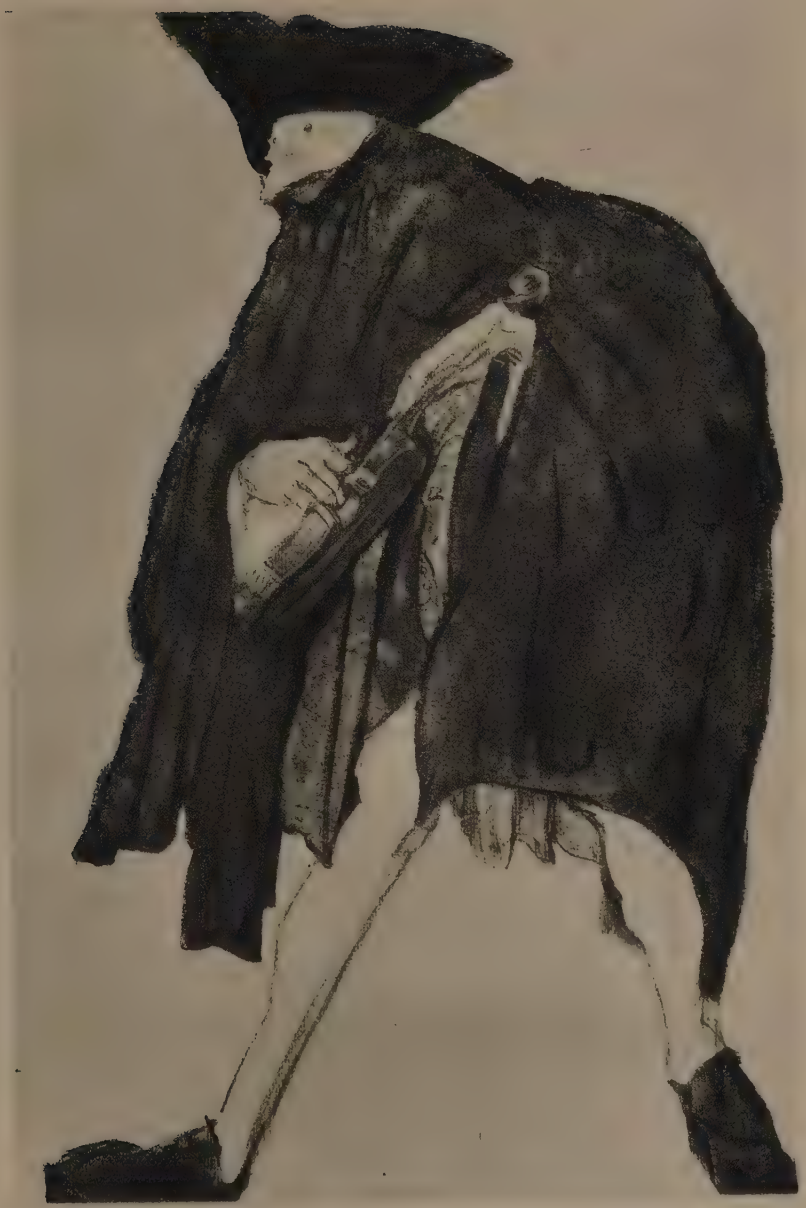
STAGE DECORATION FOR THE VAULT SCENE ("ST. SEBASTIAN")
BY LEON BAKST
(Reproduced from "The Story of Leon Bakst's Life," Alexander Kogan Publishing Company and The Bayard Press)
PLATE 71

STAGE DECORATION FOR "LÂCHETÉ" BY LEON BAKST

(Reproduced from "The Story of Leon Bakst's Life," Alexander Kogan Publishing Company and The Bayard Press)

PLATE 72

COSTUME FOR "LE CHANTRE ET LA DÉVOTE" BY LEON BAKST
(Reproduced from "The Story of Leon Bakst's Life," Alexander Kogan Publishing Company and The Bayard Press)
PLATE 73



WANDERING MUSICIAN'S COSTUME FOR "THE GOOD HUMOURED LADIES"
BY LEON BAKST

(Reproduced from "The Story of Leon Bakst's Life," Alexander Kogan Publishing Company and The Bayard Press)

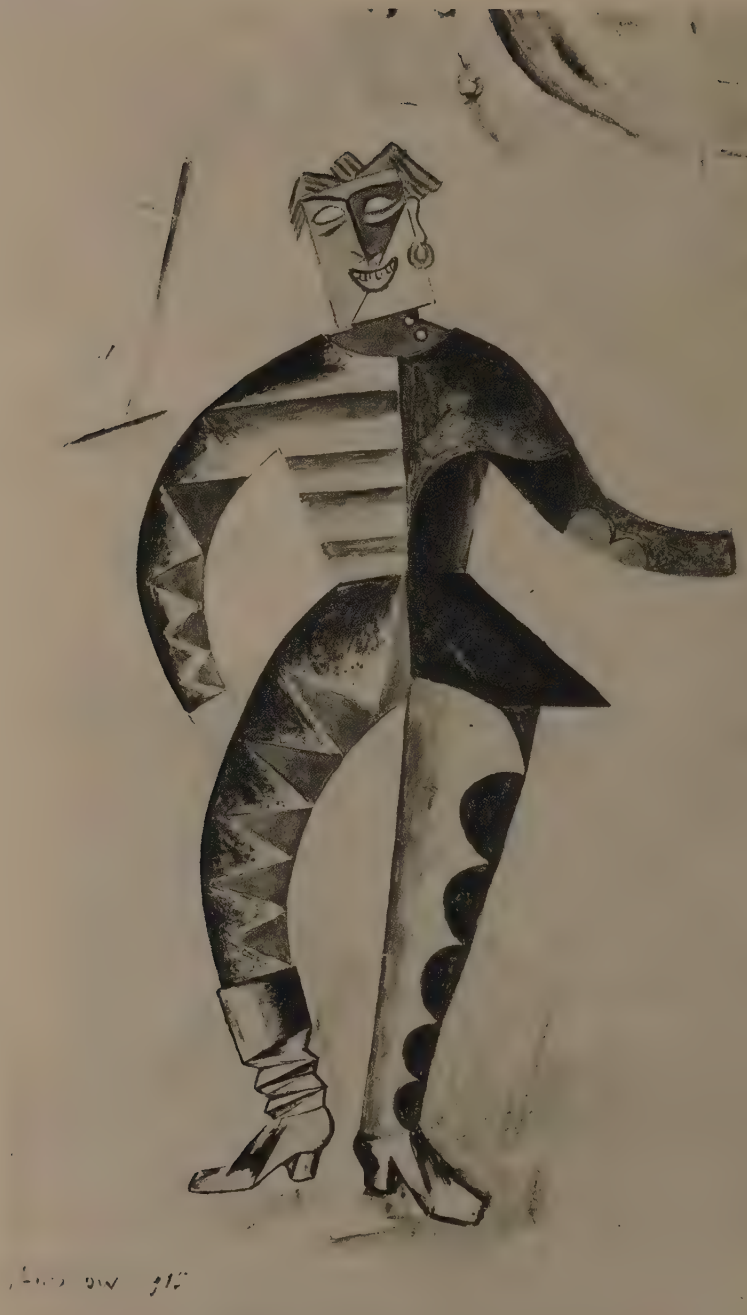
PLATE 74

"LA POUPÉE AUX DENTELLES" FOR "BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE" BY LEON BAKST

(Reproduced from "The Story of Leon Bakst's Life," Alexander Kogan Publishing Company and The Bayard Press)

PLATE 75

COSTUME FOR THE ENGLISHWOMAN "BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE"
BY LEON BAKST
(Reproduced from "The Story of Leon Bakst's Life," Alexander Kogan Publishing Company and The Bayard Press)
PLATE 76



DESIGN FOR THE COSTUME OF A "BOUFFON" IN "CHOUT"
BY M. LARIONOV
PLATE 77

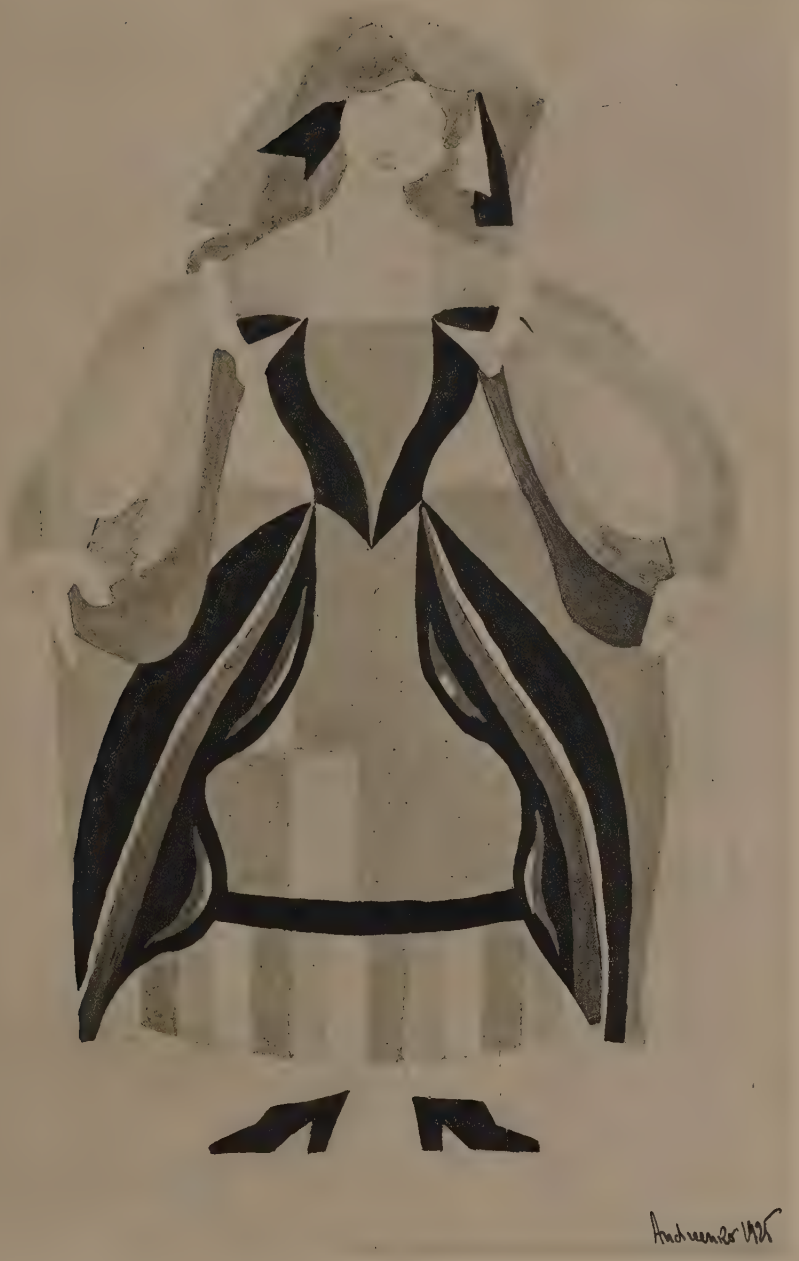
COSTUME DESIGN FOR "BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE"
BY LEON BAKST
(Reproduced from "The Story of Leon Bakst's Life," Alexander Kogan Publishing Company and the Bayard Press)
PLATE 78

PROJECTED DESIGN FOR AN ACT DROP
BY VICTOR BARTHE
PLATE 79

SCENE IN GOZSI'S "PRINCESS TURANDOT"
DESIGNED BY IGN. NIVINSKY (WAKHANGOFF STUDIO, MOSCOW)
PLATE 80

DECORATION FOR A SERIES OF SHORT PLAYS
BY PROSPER MERIMÉE
DESIGNED BY IGN. NIVINSKY
PLATE 81

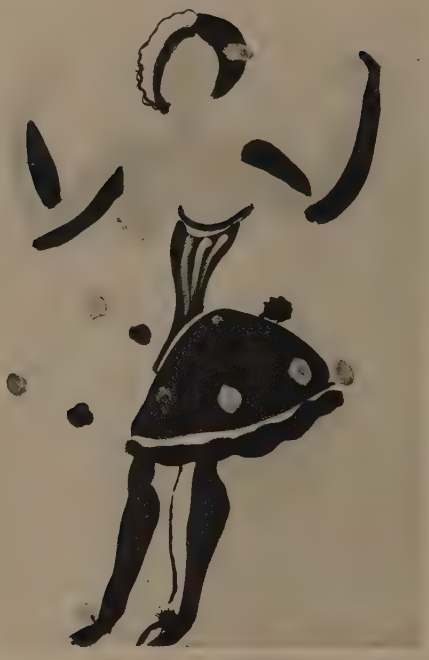
DESIGN FOR A COSTUME IN A RUSSIAN PLAY
BY MICHAEL ANDREENKO
PLATE 82



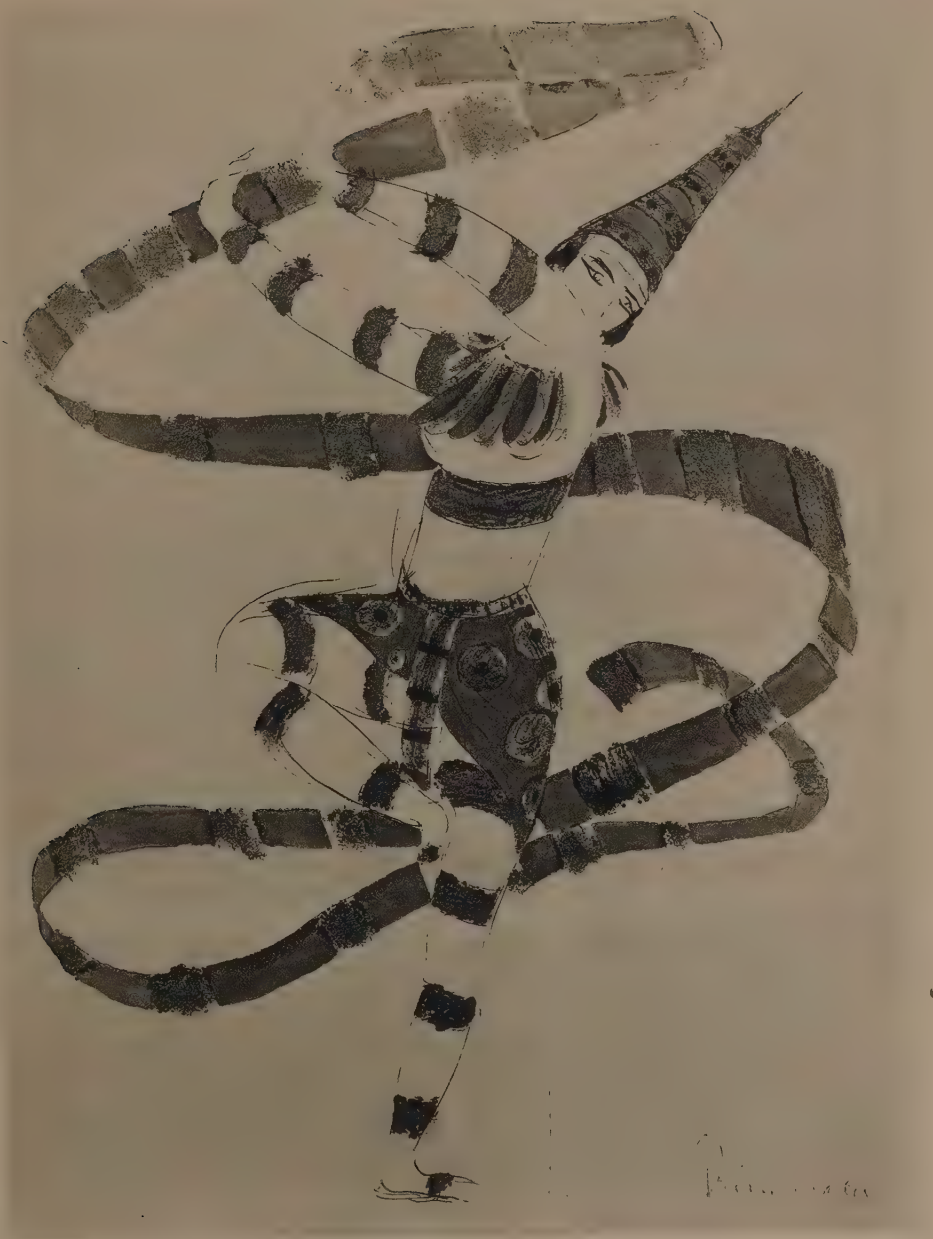
DESIGN FOR A COSTUME
BY MICHAEL ANDREENKO
PLATE 83

DESIGN FOR A BACKCLOTH
BY ALEXANDRE BENOIS
PLATE 84

DESIGN FOR "AIMER"
BY DRESA
PLATE 85



1 AND 2. DESIGNS FOR COSTUMES BY ANDRÉ DERAIN
3 AND 4. DESIGNS FOR COSTUMES IN "ROMÉO ET JULIETTE" BY JEAN VICTOR HUGO
PLATE 86

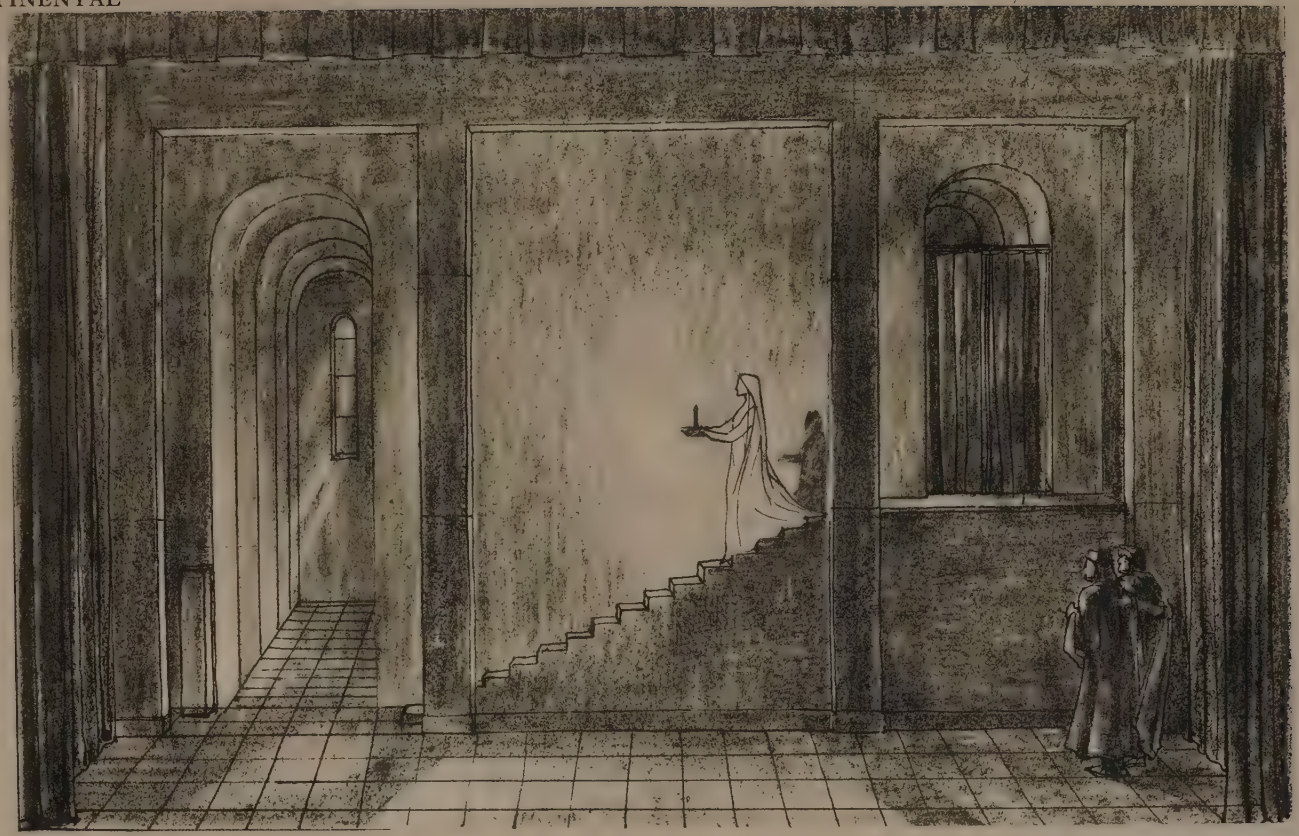


COSTUME FOR "SAMSON AND DELILAH"
BY ISAAC GRÜNEWALD
PLATE 87

DESIGN FOR "ARLEQUIN"
BY J. G. DOMERGUE
PLATE 88

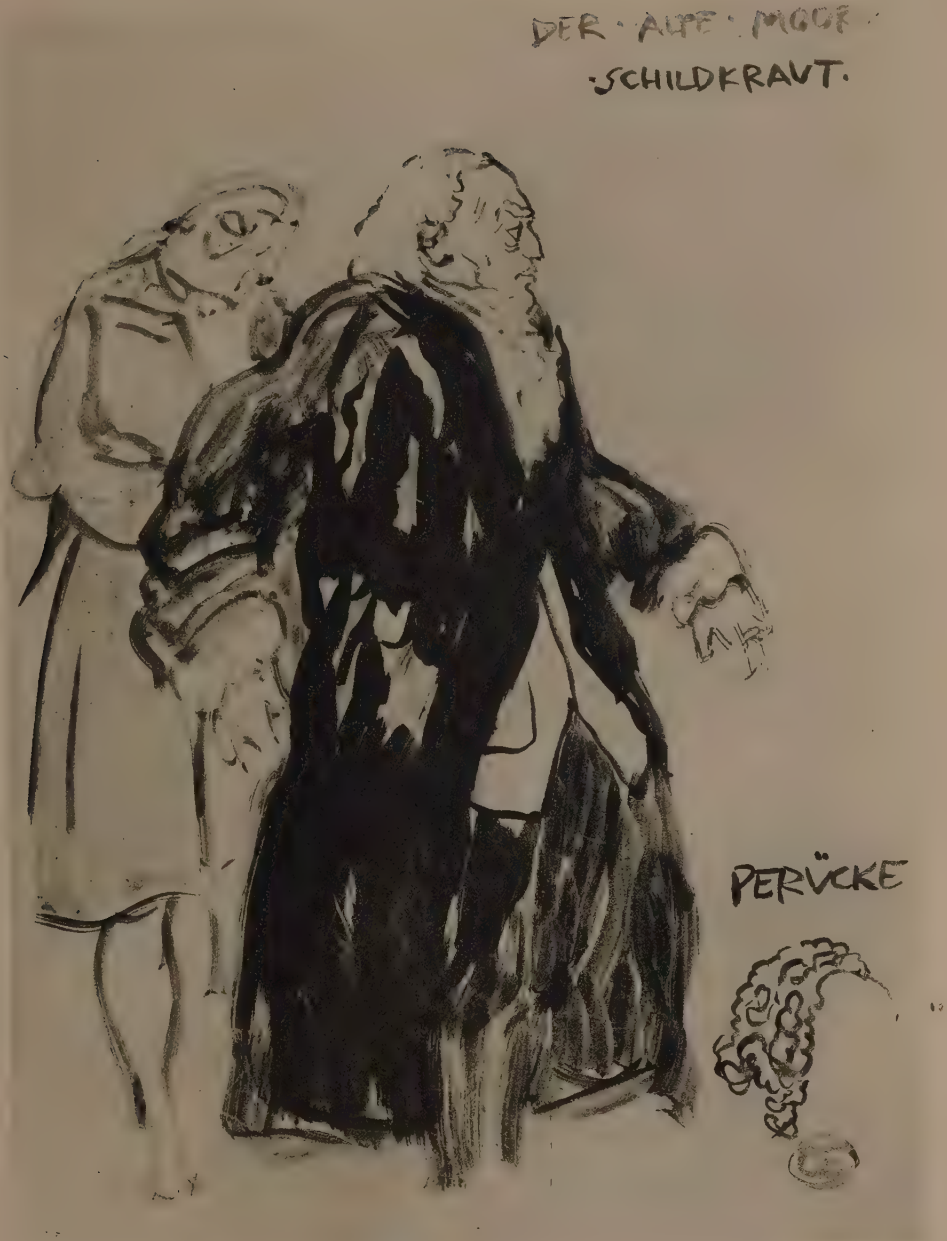
DESIGN FOR "THE MAGIC FLUTE"
BY WINKLER TANNENBERG
PLATE 89

DESIGN FOR "OTHELLO"
BY EMIL PIRCHAN
PLATE 90



DESIGN FOR "MACBETH"
BY FRITZ SCHUMACHER
PLATE 91

COSTUME FOR OPERA " FAY-YEN-FAH "
DESIGNED BY STOWITTS
(By courtesy of M. & J. de Brunoff.)
PLATE 92



COSTUME DESIGN FOR "DIE RÄUBER"
BY EMIL ORLIK
PLATE 93

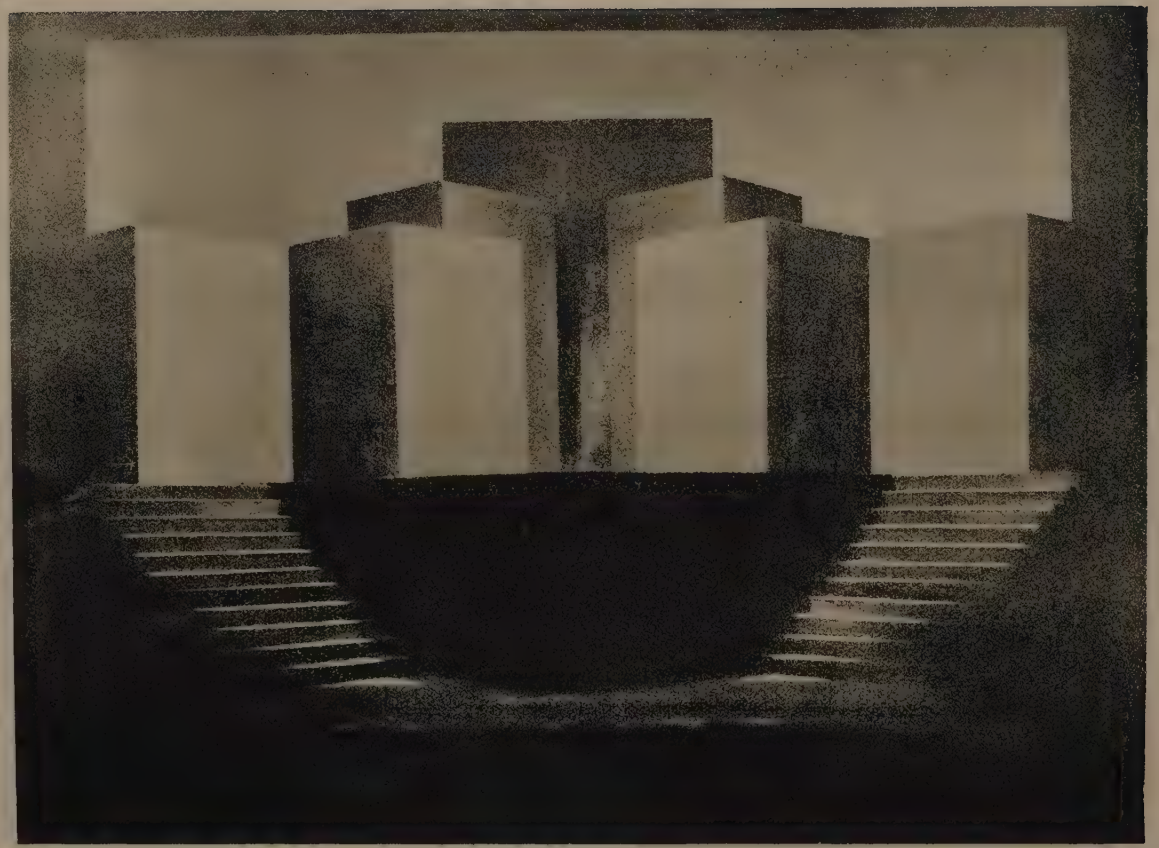
DESIGN FOR COSTUME IN "ARIADNE AUF NAXOS"
BY ERNST STERN
PLATE 94

COSTUME DESIGN FOR "ARIADNE AUF NAXOS"
BY ERNST STERN
(Reproduced from Portfolio, published by Adolph Fürstner)
PLATE 95

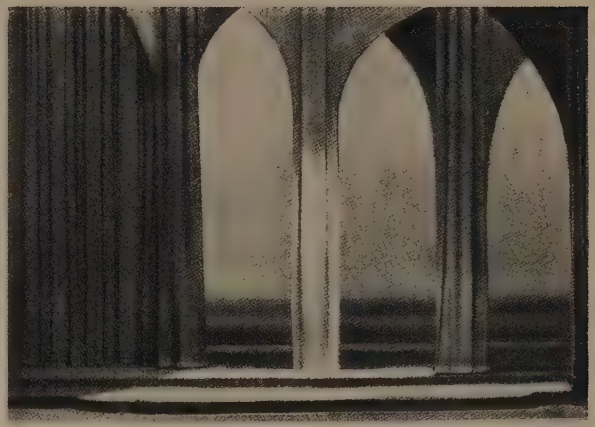
DESIGN FOR BALLET " DIE GRÜNE FLÖTE " AT THE DEUTSCHES THEATER
BY ERNST STERN
PLATE 96

DESIGN FOR "JUDITH"
BY LUDWIG SIEVERT
PLATE 97

DESIGN FOR STAGE SETTING BY FELIX CZIOSSEK
PLATE 98



DESIGN FOR " ÖDIPUS " BY T. C. PILLARTZ
(Reproduced from " Das Moderne Bühnenbild," Oskar Fischel)
PLATE 99

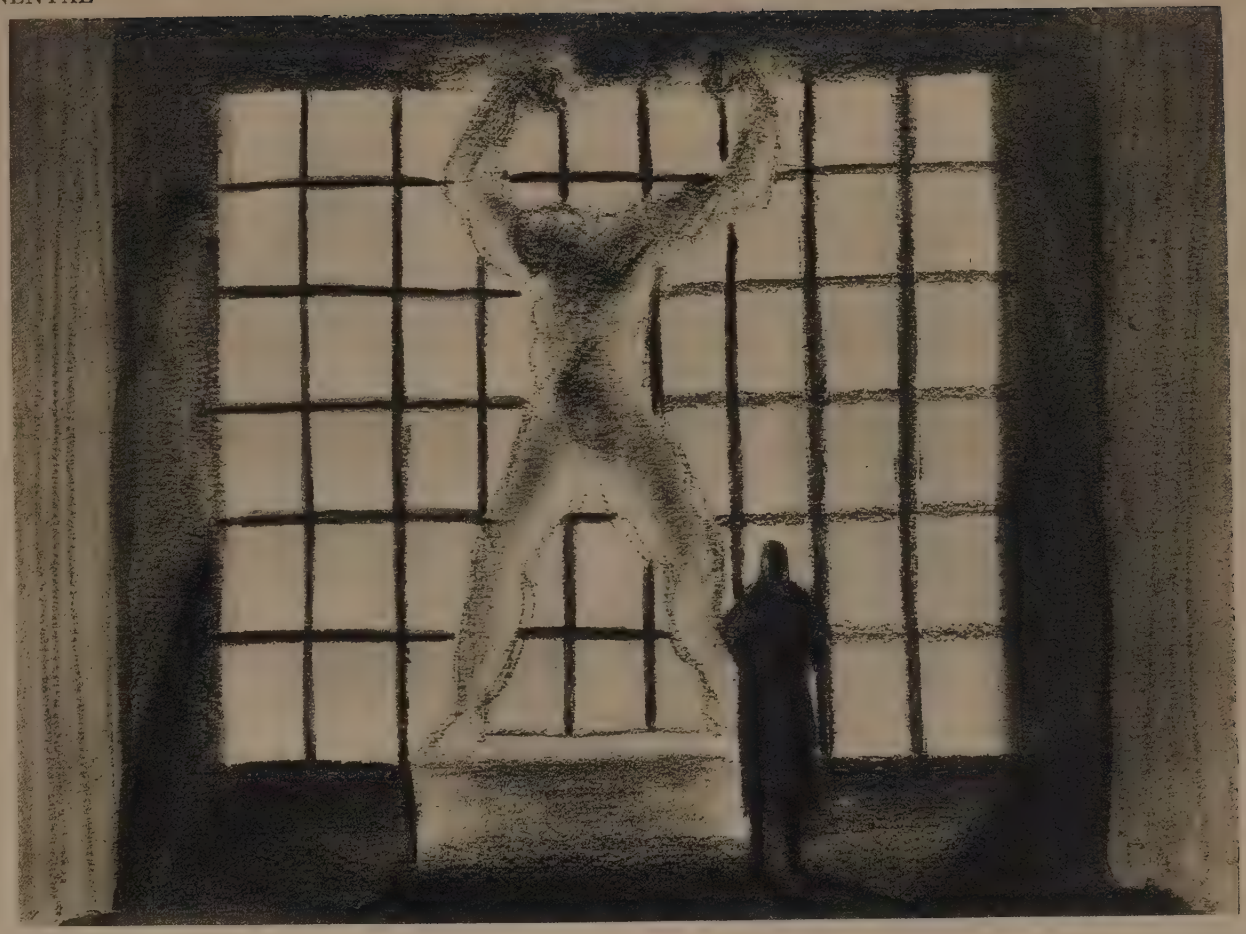


SEMI-PERMANENT STAGE SETTINGS
DESIGNED BY ADOLPH MAHNKE
PLATE 100

DESIGN FOR "ST. JACOBS FAHRT"
BY MAXIM FREY
PLATE 101

COSTUME FOR LOHENGRIN BY F. FEDOROVSKY
(Photo "Art et Décoration")
PLATE 102

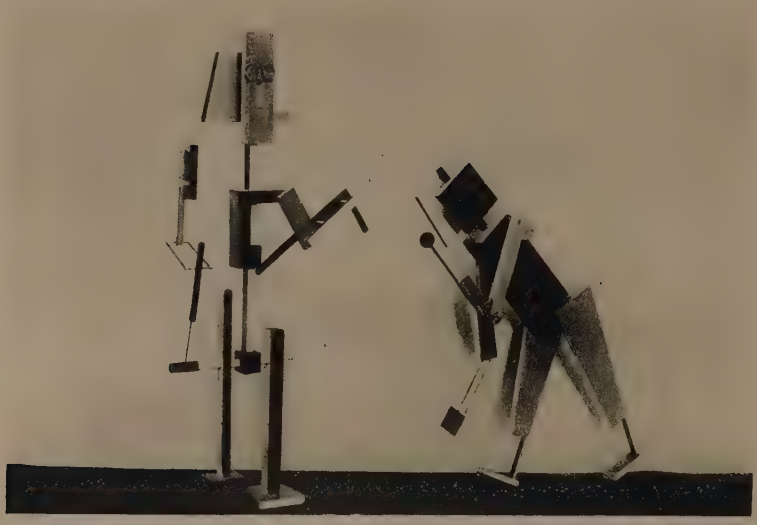
STAGE SETTING FOR "SEPT CHANSONS"
BY VALDO BARBEY
(Photo "Art et Décoration")
PLATE 103



DESIGN FOR "DIE WANDLUNG" BY P. G. GUDURIAN
PLATE 104

DESIGN FOR " CARMEN "
BY P. ARAVANTINOS
(Reproduced from " Das Moderne Bühnenbild," Oskar Fischel)
PLATE 105

DESIGN FOR " MACBETH " BY K. STRÖM AND ROCHUS GLIESE
PLATE 106



MARIONETTES BY KURT SCHMIDT (Reproduced from "Die Bühne im Bauhaus")

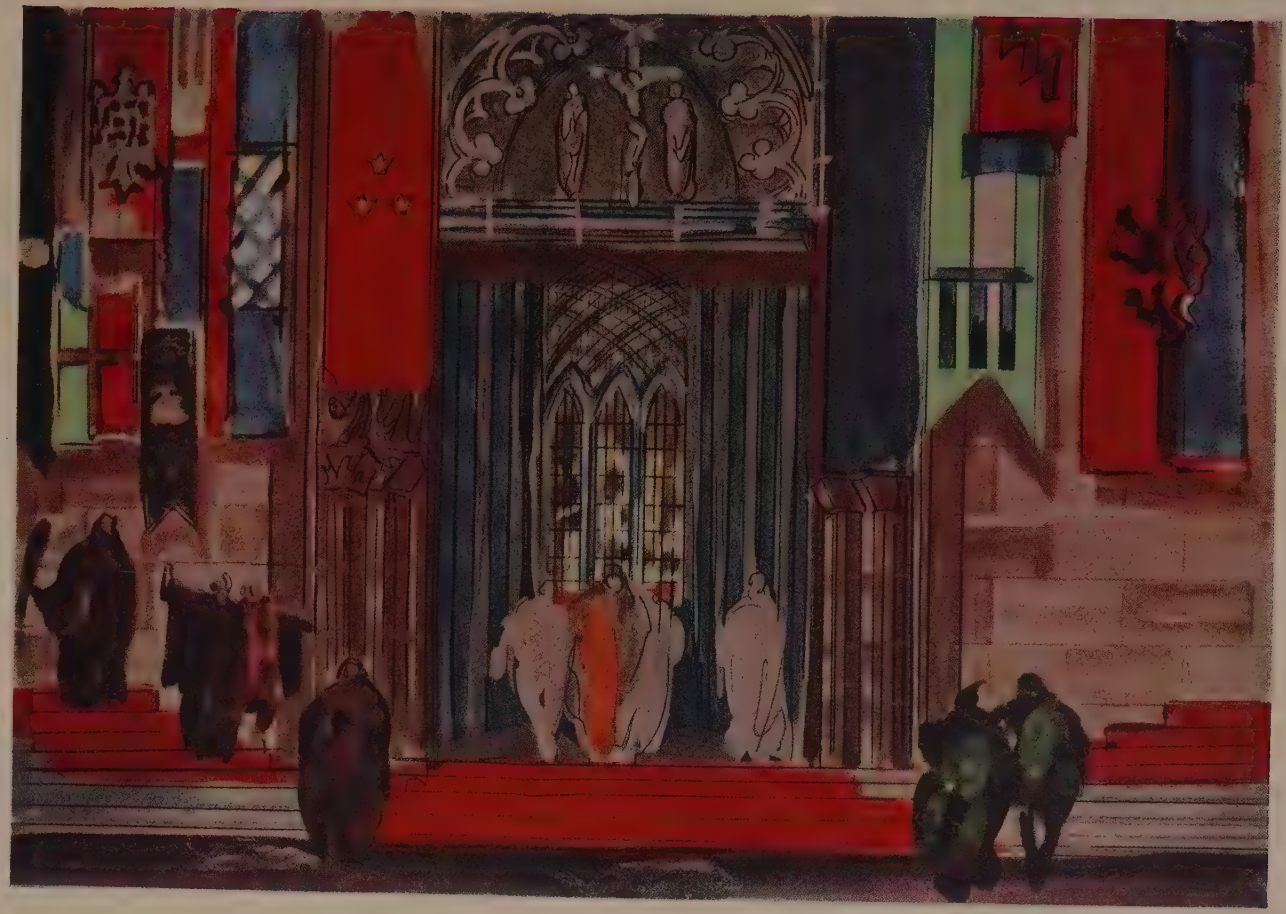
DESIGN BY OSKAR SCHLEMMER (Reproduced from "Die Bühne im Bauhaus")
PLATE 107

DESIGN FOR "DANTON'S DEATH"
BY OSKAR STRNAD
PLATE 108

DESIGN FOR " FIDELIO " (SALZBURG MUSICAL FESTIVAL) BY CLEMENS HOLZMEISTER
PLATE 109

STAGE SETTING FOR "COCU MAGNIFIQUE"
BY L. POPOVA
(Photo "Art et Décoration")
PLATE 110

TETITEATRO. "CONCEPTION FOR A TRAGEDY"
BY ALBERTO MARTINI
PLATE III



DESIGN FOR STAGE SETTING BY A. BARANOWSKY

(Reproduced from "Neuzeitliche Bühnen-Malerei" by A. Baranowsky and A. Mahnke)

PLATE 112

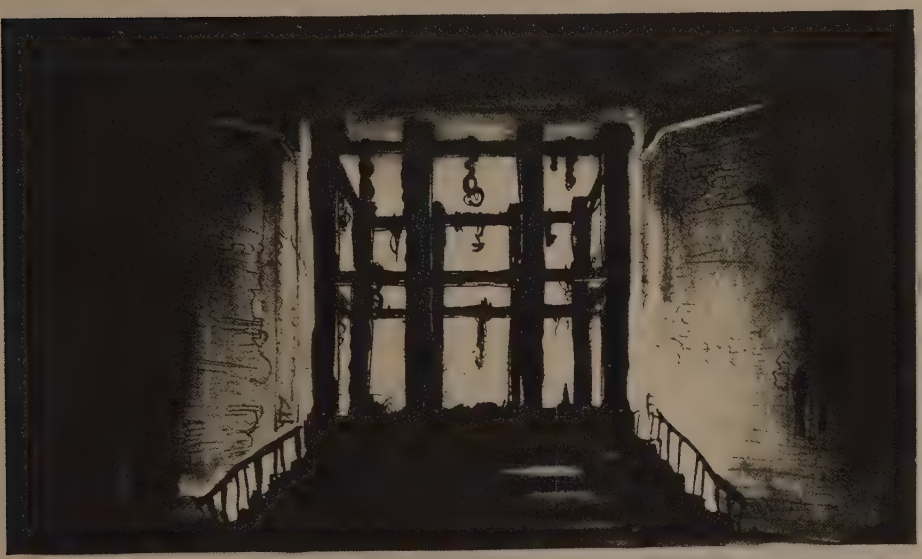
STAGE SETTING FOR " THE MERCHANT OF VENICE "
BY H. Th. WIJDEWELT
PLATE 113

STAGE SETTING FOR "HAMLET"
BY JAN VAN DAM
PLATE 114

STAGE SETTING FOR "POPPY GOD," ACT III (SELWYN PRODUCTION, HUDSON THEATRE, NEW YORK),
BY JOHN WENGER
PLATE 115

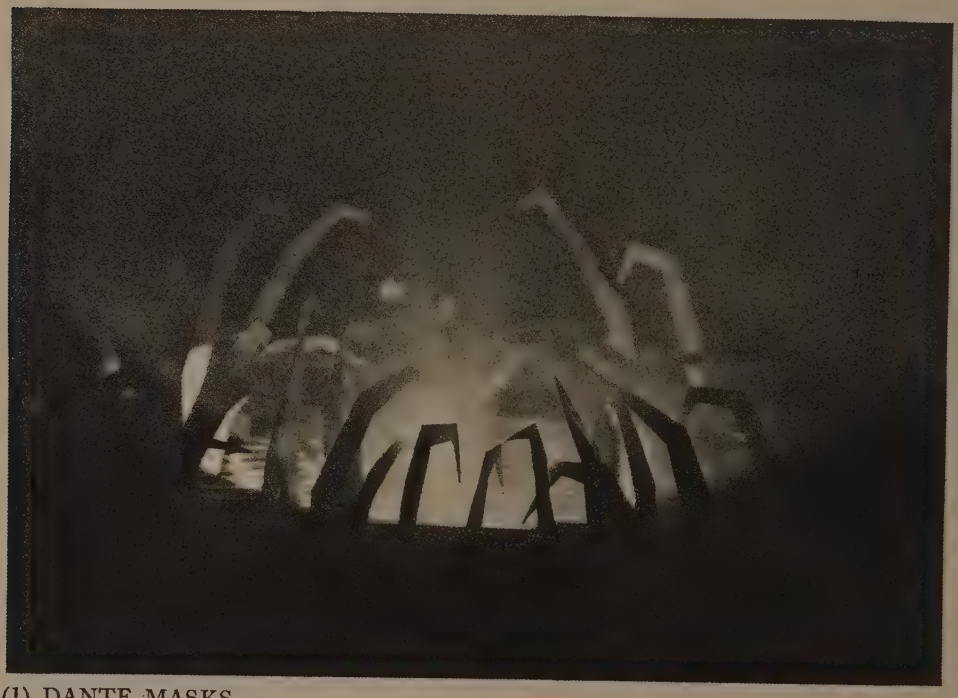
(1) " HAMLET," ACT V., SCENE I.

(2) " THE SAINT " (PORTICO OF A SEMINARY AT LAS FLORES, N. MEXICO) DESIGNED BY ROBERT EDMOND JONES
PLATE 116



(1) "'THE BIRTHDAY OF THE INFANTA" SCENE II.
(2) "KING RICHARD III:," ACT V., SCENE IV.
DESIGNED BY ROBERT EDMOND JONES

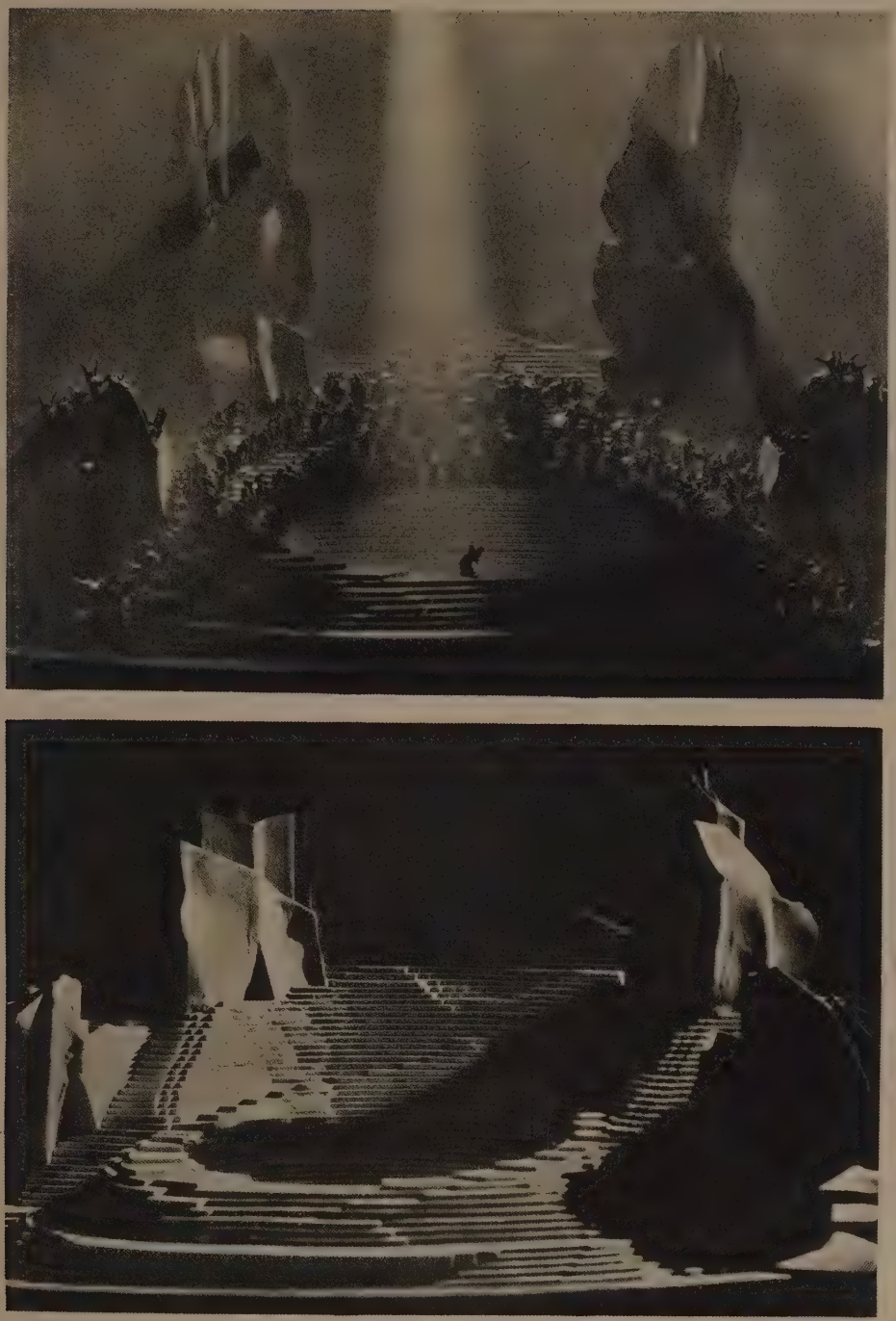
(The illustrations on this and the preceding page are reproduced from "Drawings for the Theatre," by Robert Edmond Jones. Published by Theatre Arts Inc.)



(1) DANTE MASKS
(2) PROJECT FOR DANTE'S " DIVINE COMEDY "
BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES

(The illustrations on this and the following page are reproduced from "The Divine Comedy," by Norman-Bel Geddes, Published by Theatre Arts Inc.)

PLATE 118



PROJECTS FOR DANTE'S "DIVINE COMEDY"
BY NORMAN-BEL GEDDES
PLATE 119

DESIGN FOR " DON QUIXOTE," ACT II (METROPOLITAN OPERA, NEW YORK)
BY JOSEPH URBAN
PLATE 120